Table of Contents

1. Cats of the Clans
2. Prologue
3. Chapter 1
4. Chapter 2
5. Chapter 3
6. Chapter 4
7. Chapter 5
8. Chapter 6
9. Chapter 7
10. Chapter 8
11. Chapter 9
12. Chapter 10
13. Chapter 11
14. Chapter 12
15. Chapter 13
16. Chapter 14

Cats of the Clans

Cats of the Clans

These are the cats of each Clan. None of the Clans are from the original warriors and the warriors are also made up. The apprentices with '(' and ')' behind them tells you that the cat either turns into a warrior later in the story, or is a kit right now and is going to become an apprentice.

LightningClan:

Leader: Maplestar- Large creamy brown tom with pale yellow eyes

Deputy: Battleheart-Skinny black tom with short fur and Amber eyes

Apprentice: Gingerpaw (Gingerkit)

Medicine cat: Redheart- small brown she-cat with a red patch of fur on her chest

Apprentice- Greenpaw

Warriors:

Treetail- Large brown tom with a thick long tail

Apprentice- Dogpaw (Dogkit)

Longlegs- Skinny tabby tom with unusually long legs and blue eyes

Hawkwing- Fierce looking pale tabby tom with deep orange eyes

Apprentice- Leafpaw

Skymountain- Light brown she-cat with sky blue eyes

Fireclaw- Bright orange tom with blazing yellow eyes

Tigerfang- Dark orange and black striped tom with long fangs

Spottedlegs- Tortoiseshell she-cat with spotted legs

Apprentice- Fluffpaw (Fluffkit)

Leopardtail- Yellow she-cat with a thin tail

Apprentice: Tallpaw (Tallbark)

Jaypelt- Gray-blue tom with sharp green eyes

Apprentice- Goldenpaw

Eagleclaw- Black and brown tom with long claws

Apprentice- Cloudpaw

Dryears- Black tom with hair-less ears

Dirtpelt- Dirty brown tabby tom with large yellow eyes

Apprentice- Brownpaw (Brownclaw)

Blazeheart- Bright yellow she-cat with roan coloured patches

Apprentice- Palepaw

Orangefire- Blazing orange tom with bright orange eyes

Apprentice- Redpaw (Redkit)

Shelltail- Pale yellow tom with a long tail.

Apprentices:

Tallpaw- Deep brown tom with orange eyes

Brownpaw- Solid brown tom with Amber eyes

Leafpaw- Tortoiseshell she-cat with a black tail tip

Goldenpaw- Bright yellow she-cat with one yellow eye and one

green eye

Cloudpaw- snowy white tom with black ears

Palepaw- Pale yellow tom with blue eyes

Greenpaw- deep brown she-cat that almost looks green

Queens:

Snowtail- snowy white she-cat (mother of Gingerkit)

Mothflower- Gray tabby she-cat (mother of Dogkit and Redkit)

Rosepelt- Light gray she-cat with darker splotches (mother of Fluffkit)

Lillynose- Pale orange and white she-cat (expecting Fireclaw's kits, eventually Littlekit and Hazelkit)

Elders:

Cranky legs- Brown tabby tom with yellow eyes and a broken leg

Swifteyes- Small gray tom with intelligent bright looking blue eyes

Velvetnose- Small white she-cat with silvery gray hairs on her muzzle

Baldears- Large black tom with clawed ears

Whisperfur- Large red she-cat with very long fur

SunClan:

Leader: Cloudstar- Large white she-cat with beautiful blue eyes

Deputy: Brighttail- Tortoiseshell tom with a black tail

Apprentice- Sleekpaw (Sleekkit)

Medicine Cat: Minttail- Small tabby tom with green eyes

Apprentice- Poppypaw

Warriors: Cliftlegs- Large solid brown tom with blazing orange eyes

Raventail- Solid black tom with deep yellow eyes

Apprentice- Berrypaw (Berryheart)

Hollyflower- Black she-cat with orange eyes

Apprentice- Mothpaw (Mothkit)

Bearfoot- Large fluffy brown tom with unusually long hairs on his paws

Goldenleaf- Yellow she-cat with green eyes

Apprentice- Poppypaw

Swiftstorm- Shadowy gray she-cat with long horizontal stripes on her back

Apprentice- Littlepaw (Littlekit)

Ivystream- Dark blue she-cat with pale orange eyes

Shadoweyes- Black tom with bright yellow eyes

Darkshadow- Black tom with pale markings on his tail

Pinetooth- Soft brown tom with silky fur

Apprentice- Featherpaw (Featherstream)

Tigerstripe- Large bulky tom with dark brown stripes

Apprentice- Leafpaw

Raggedshell- Rough furred tom with a battle-marked pelt and yellow eyes

Crookedlegs- Small yellow tom with a twisted fore leg

Addertail- green-brown tom with a solid black tail

Apprentice- Roundpaw (Roundeye)

Apprentices: Berrypaw- Small black tom with dark gray markings

Poppypaw- Red-brown she-cat with pale green eyes

Leafpaw- Tortoiseshell she-cat with yellow eyes

Featherpaw- White she-cat with blue eyes

Roundpaw- Long furred tom with unusually large paws

Queens: Flowerheart- Pale yellow she-cat (Mother of Sleekkit, Mothkit and Littlekit)

Lillytail- Dark brown she-cat with light brown spots (expecting Pinetooth's kits, eventually Birchkit, Flamekit and Ashkit)

Faddedsun- Beautiful light red she-cat (Mother of Smallkit, Robinkit and Foxkit)

Mosswind- Small gray she-cat with silky fur (Mother of Sparrowkit and Jaykit)

Lavenderfur- Creamy brown she-cat with short soft fur (expecting Raventails kits, eventually Sedgekit, Boulderkit and Lillykit)

Elders: Shadowrise- Large brown and gray tom with thick stripes

Lemonfur- Rusty coloured she-cat with blue eyes

Maplecloud- Pale brown tom with yellow eyes

Tallsun- Yellow tom with blazing green eyes

FieldClan:

Leader: Leapstar- Pale yellow tom with three black paws and one white

Deputy: Foxrun- Pale orange tom with streaks of black down his tail

Apprentice- Firepaw

Medicine Cat: Fallenweb- Gray she-cat with blue eyes and faint stripes

Apprentice- Hilltop- Gray blue tom with white paws

Warriors: Paddedfur- Small brown tabby tom with yellow eyes

Ringtail- Large gray tom with black rings on his tail

Apprentice- Rockpaw (Rockpelt)

Spottedfur- Brown she-cat with black spots and a thin tail

Mouseheart- Solid brown she-cat with blue gray eyes

Apprentice- Logpaw

Smoothclaw- Fierce black tom with long claws and silvery eyes

Apprentice- Brightpaw (Brightfrost)

Softpelt- Small white and black tom with soft fur

Whisperfeather- Very light gray tom with white splotches all over

Iceleap- Snowy white she-cat with a black tail and blue eyes

Apprentice- Brownpaw (Brownkit)

Haremask- gray and brown tom with a black muzzle

Apprentice- Graypaw (Grayfang)

Trailblaze- Large brown tom with fierce orange eyes

Shiverwind- Silvery gray tom with long fur and green eyes

Apprentice- Yellowpaw

Silentwing- Solid gray she-cat with beautiful blue eyes

Apprentice- Blackpaw

Woodcloud- Solid brown tom with yellow eyes

Apprentice- Rosepaw (Rosekit)

Forestnose- Brown, black and white spotted tom

Apprentices: Logpaw- Small brown tom with yellow eyes

Rockpaw- Solid gray tom with green eyes

Squirrelpaw- brown and white splotched she-cat

Brightpaw- Bright yellow she-cat with orange spots

Yellowpaw- Deep yellow she-cat with large oval spots and brown eyes

Firepaw- Bright orange tom with rust coloured stripes

Graypaw- Dark gray tom with a light gray tail and yellow eyes

Blackpaw- A black tom with a white nose, ears and paws

Queens: Treeflower- Dark brown she-cat (Expecting Softpelt's kits, eventually Sorrelkit, Spiderkit, Russetkit and Dustkit)

Pinefur- Small gray she-cat (Mother of Brownkit and Rosekit)

Poppygrass- Pale red-brown she-cat (Expecting Whisperfeather's kits, eventually Cloudkit)

Elders: Barknose- Brown and black tabby tom

Grasstail- Pale yellow and white she-cat

Heavylegs- Large black tom with thick bulky legs

Largeeyes- Small she-cat with huge green eyes

RainClan

Leader: Streamstar- Silvery blue tom with deep blue eyes

Deputy: Stonefang- Dark gray tom with long teeth and yellow eyes

Apprentice- Wolfpaw (Wolfkit)

Medicine Cat: Reedpelt- Small red tom with silky fur

Apprentice- Snowpaw (Snowkit)

Warriors: Weedfur- Large brown tom with messy spiky fur

Apprentice- Swiftpaw

Stormcloud- Dark gray tom with lighter splotches and yellow eyes

Apprentice- Lightpaw (Lightkit)

Shoresand- Light brown she-cat with light yellow markings

Rocktail- Light gray tom with a thick fluffy tail

Apprentice- Thrushpaw (Thrushwing)

Sandnose- Pale brown she-cat with a dark brown muzzle

Apprentice- Flowerpaw (Flowerkit)

Splashblaze- Jet black tom with a splash of white on his back

Apprentice- Mousepaw (Mousewhisper)

Cloudhead- Dark gray tom with a white head and yellow eyes

Apprentice- Swanpaw (Swankit)

Dasiyfur- light brown she-cat with thick soft fur

Apprentice- Bearpaw (Bearkit)

Whitecloud- snowy white tom with gray spots on his legs

Apprentice- Whitepaw

Littleflower- Pale orange tom with horizontal markings along his back

Pearlwing- Pale yellow she-cat with light orange markings along the flank

Apprentice- Salmonpaw (Salmontail)

Longclaw- Brown tom with unusually long claws

Apprentice- Stormpaw

Branchtail- Black and brown tom with white spots and green eyes

Redspot- Small red tom with brown spots on his back

Apprentice- Duckpaw (Duckkit)

Rosenight- Pale brown she-cat with dark brown splotches along the flank

Apprentice- Flightpaw (Flightkit)

Apprentices: Whitepaw- White tom with yellow eyes

Stormpaw- Dark gray tom with pale green eyes

Salmonpaw- Black tom with light brown spots

Thrushpaw- Small brown tom with yellow eyes

Mousepaw- Brown tabby she-cat

Swiftpaw- Dark gray she-cat with brown stripes all over

Queens: Ivynose- Light brown she-cat (expecting Cloudhead's kits, eventually Ivykit and Weaselkit)

Paleleaf- Tortoiseshell she-cat (Mother of Snowkit and Lightkit)

Streamheart- Silvery gray she-cat (Mother of Bearkit, Wolfkit and Duckkit)

Brightclaw- Tortoiseshell she-cat (Mother of Flowerkit, Flightkit and Swankit)

Nightsky- Solid black she-cat (expecting Stormcloud's kits, eventually Shiverkit, and Daisykit)

Elders: Brownpelt- Dirty brown tom with yellow eyes

Squirrelnight- Light brown she-cat with black stripes

Skyrock- Gray blue she-cat with light yellow eyes

Prologue

A starry shape shimmered next to the tall, blank rock and another cat appeared close by. The first was a starry blue she-cat, strong and majestic. The second was a handsome ginger tom with a flame coloured pelt.

“Shall we bring the others?” The ginger tom asked softly, his green eyes flashing.

“Yes. They do take part in this.” The she-cat replied without looking at the tom. The orange tom left the she-cat sitting there on her own as she thought about the prophecy that had just been given to them. After a moment, a thin tabby tom, a dark brown she-cat and a ginger tabby tom appeared behind the flame coloured tom.

“I have brought them.” He told the shining gray-blue cat as he dipped his head respectfully.

“Greetings Bluestar. What has brought us here?” The dark brown she-cat mewed softly with her head tilted slightly.

“I bring a prophecy that affects the future of your clans. We need two cats to take on the responsibility of leading the clans into a better world. I’ve brought you here for your opinion.”

“Why don’t we ever get the prophecies? We’re the ancestors of these cats. **We** should be the ones receiving the prophecy, not **you!**” The ginger tabby yowled so suddenly the blue she-cat leaped to her feet.

“Gingertail, I don’t know why we are getting them, but I am sharing this with you. Is that not enough?” Bluestar replied as gently as possible, trying not to show her anger. The tabby growled, but sat down again.

“I think this cat should be one of them.” The thin tabby mewed after a heartbeat. Suddenly, a small figure appeared on the rock.

Bluestar shook her head harshly.

“No, Narrowstar. He has no hope of leading the clan one day. He is too narrow minded.” Narrowstar sighed and nodded briefly at the ginger tom’s reply.

“What about him?” The cats all stared at the new cat on the rock.

“Possibly. He shows great determination. I say he’d be one of them.” Gingertail mewed. The rest of the cats agreed. Bluestar sat down with her slim tail curled over her paws.

“What about the next cat? We need two cats.”

“I know!” The blazing ginger tom snarled. “I was thinking!” Bluestar leaped to her paws at the fierceness in his tone. Blue eyes flashing, she mewed,

“No need to be so loud Gingertail. I was just asking.” Gingertail growled and unsheathed his claws, but sat down again. The five cats sat in silence as they each thought about who they wanted to be the second cat.

“I think she should be the second cat.” The dark brown she-cat spoke up and sent a flurry of stars that formed another shape. “She is loyal and fair minded. I think she’d make a great leader.” When no cat argued, Bluestar spoke up again.

“Then it’s decided. The two of them shall be the cats. I will deliver the prophecy as soon as they are ready. If they need, remind them the importance of the prophecy. They **must** follow it, or else the new clans will collapse.” The starry cats started to fade. Soon, only Bluestar was left in the clearing, standing on the rock, head lifted to the star filled sky…

Chapter 1

Gingerpaw

“Snowtail! Snowtail! Wake up! Can I please go outside with Dogkit, Fluffkit and Redkit?” Soft, tiny, ginger paws playfully pushed at Snowtail’s side.

“Gingerkit, is that you again? Okay, just don’t go outside of the camp.” Snowtail said with an affectionate lick and settled back down on the soft moss.

“Yay! Dogkit, Fluffkit, Redkit, watch out, here I come!” Gingerkit gave out a small yowl and scrambled out of the nursery, into the bright morning sunshine. Battleheart, the LightningClan deputy was organizing the patrols as Gingerkit met up with Fluffkit, the grayish, fluffy kit.

“What are we going to play today?” Gingerkit asked Fluffkit as he caught up with the other kits.

“I don’t know. Do you want to pretend that we are LightningClan warriors and Dogkit and Redkit are SunClan warriors that we battle?” Fluffkit is the only kit of Rosepelt. His sister and brother died not long after they were born. Out of the four kits, Fluffkit was the oldest and always decided what to do.

“Okay then. I’ll be Redwing, Dogkit can be Dogear, Fluffkit can be Fluffball and Gingerkit will be Gingerlegs.” Redkit decided with her chest puffed out as she crouched down.

“No! I don’t want to be Fluffball! I want to be Fluffstar! Leader of LightningClan!” Fluffkit complained.

“Fine, you don’t have to be Fluffball, but you can’t be leader! That’s not fair!” Redkit replied. “Your name is… Flufftail!”

“Okay, but I’m the deputy of LightningClan.” Fluffkit said with his

head raised high.

“Hey! Flufftail, why are you on our territory?” Redkit suddenly hissed.

“Yeah! This is SunClans territory!” Dogkit added with a growl as she dropped into a battle crouch.

“No! This is LightningClan’s territory!” Gingerkit yowled with his ears flattened against his head and his sharp white teeth showing. Fluffkit pounced onto Redkit and started pawing at her belly. Dogkit immediately attacked Fluffkit and tried to drag him off. In Fluffkit’s defence, Gingerkit sprang onto Dogkit’s back and tried pulling her off of Fluffkit. Dogkit instinctively shook her self which only made Gingerkit cling on harder with his thron-sharp claws.

“Ouch! Gingerkit, get off of me. It hurts!” Dogkit yelped when Gingerkit accidentally dug his claws in too hard. Dogkit twisted her head around once Gingerpaw let go and cried out, “Look! You made me bleed!”

“Sorry Dogkit, I didn’t mean to.” Gingerkit meowed innocently, but Dogkit was already on her way to Mothflower, her mother.

“Come here Dogkit. Did you get hurt?” Mothflower asked while gently licking her kit’s back once Dogkit burst wildly into the nursery.

“We were playing and Gingerkit clawed me too hard.” Dogkit reported while giving Gingerkit an angry glance.

“Yeah! We were pretending Fluffkit and Gingerkit were Fluffball-” Redkit started.

“Not Fluffball! Flufftail!” Interrupted Fluffkit with a mad hiss at the other kit.

“Oh right, Flufftail and Gingerlegs from LightningClan and Dogkit and I were Dogear and Redwing from SunClan and they were on our territory!”

“No! You were on our territory!” Fluffkit meowed.

“No! LightningClan was on SunClan territory!”

“SunClan was on LightningClan territory!”

“That’s enough!” Mothflower yowled while glaring down at the screeching kits. All the kits went silent. “Gingerkit, Redkit and Fluffkit, go fetch some fresh kill to eat. Dogkit, come with me. We’re going to Redheart to see if there’s anything to do about that little scratch on your back. Understood?”

“Yes Mothflower.” All the kits replied. Rolling his eyes in annoyance, Gingerkit, Redkit and Fluffkit went to the fresh kill pile and each took a piece of prey from the well stocked fresh-kill pile. It looked as if a hunting patrol just came back.

Gingerkit took a thrush for the three kits to share, Redkit took a wood pigeon for Snowtail and Mothflower to eat, and Fluffkit took a rabbit for Rosepelt and Lillynose to eat, making sure all the queens would be content with their prey.

As the kits finished the thrush, they went back to the nursery so take a nap. “Snowtail, when can I become an apprentice?” Gingerkit asked as Snowtail licked his fur flat.

“Soon my little one. You are already four moons old. Just two more moons, and you will become an apprentice and learn the ways of a true warrior.” Snowtail replied softly.

“But two moons is a long time! I want to become an apprentice right now!” Gingerkit complained eyes wide and kitish.

“You’re still too young.” Snowtail replied with a gentle lick between his bright eyes.

“Can you tell me the story of how the leader of ThunderClan was once a kittypet again?” Gingerkit asked.

“Okay, here we go. A long time ago, a young kittypet lived in his home with his twolegs. His name was Rusty and he liked his home, although it was a little boring. One day, Rusty decided to go into the forest to see what was there. In the forest, he met warriors. They were pretty nice to him and their leader, Bluestar, even asked

if he wanted to join the Clan! Rusty decided that life as a kittypet was too boring and wanted to become a warrior, so he joined. In ThunderClan, Rusty made a friend on the first day. His friend was a young apprentice named Graypaw. Once Rusty got his apprentice name which was Firepaw, he started to train with Graypaw. Firepaw's mentor at that time was shared with Graypaw and another cat named Ravenpaw. Graypaw's mentor was Lionheart and Ravenpaw's mentor was Tigerclaw. Both Tigerclaw and Lionheart helped train Firepaw. Soon after, Bluestar decided that to help Firepaw train faster, she'll train Firepaw personally. Firepaw grew into a great warrior and earned his warrior name, Fireheart." Snowtail started her story, but Gingerkit was already asleep. A gray-blue head appeared at the nursery entrance and Snowtail looked up to see Jaypelt, her mate, peeking through the nursery.

"How's our little warrior?" He murmured as he quietly slipped into the nursery, his thick tail swishing the brambles.

"Doing great. Got into a little trouble today I heard." Snowtail pressed affectionately against Jaypelt and curled her tail around their sleeping kit.

Two moons quickly flew by. Gingerkit, Redkit and Dogkit were all ready to become apprentices! Fluffkit was now called Fluffpaw and his mentor is Hawkwing. He was made an apprentice not long ago, but he had already been to his first gathering. Fluffkit had described every cat he met to his friends in the nursery and they all looked forward to go on the next gathering.

Both Redkit and Dogkit were well groomed and about to burst with excitement. Gingerkit, was stuck with Snowtail and her tongue. Snowtail licked Gingerkit over and over until he finally managed to squirm out of her grip and joined Redkit and Dogkit at the center of the clearing, his paws sending dust flying in a brown cloud.

"Would all cats old enough to catch their own prey come here, under the Tall Tree for a Clan meeting!" Maplestar's loud yowl brought cats emerging from out of their dens. They sat in a semi-circle around the three proud looking kits. Once the clan settled down, Maplestar continued with the ceremony. "Today is a very important day, when LightningClan will gain three more warriors.

Dogkit, Redkit, Gingerkit, do you promise to learn and follow the warrior code and stay loyal to LightningClan?”

“I do.” Dogkit meowed calmly, her eyes sparking in the sunshine.

“I do!” Redkit squeaked with excitement as her claws kneaded the ground beneath them. Gingerkit looked at his Clan mates and Snowtail before agreeing,

“I do.”

“Dogkit, from now and on until you receive your warrior name, you will be known as Dogpaw. Treetail, you are a loyal and brave warrior. I hope you will pass everything you know to Dogpaw.” Treetail dipped his head towards Maplestar and reached over to touch noses with Dogpaw. Treetail was an experienced warrior and Gingerpaw decided that Dogpaw was lucky to have him as her mentor.

“Redkit, from now and on until you receive your warrior name, you will be known as Redpaw. Orangefire, you are a very experienced warrior. I hope you will teach Redpaw everything you know.” Orangefire walked over to Redkit, touched noses with her and sat down next to the new apprentice.

“Gingerkit, from now and on until you receive your warrior name, you will be known as Gingerpaw. Battleheart, you are a very brave warrior in battle. I hope you will teach Gingerpaw all your secrets in battle.” Maplestar meowed. Gingerpaw's heart rose as he found out he would have the clan deputy as his mentor. Eyes glinting in the sun, Battleheart touched noses with Gingerpaw and whispered,

“Let’s go hunting first!” Gingerpaw’s eyes glimmered with excitement and nodded.

“Dogpaw! Redpaw! Gingerpaw!” The Clan called out the new apprentices names and congratulated them as they swarmed around before their mentors took them outside.

“Wow! The forest is huge!” Gingerpaw exclaimed when they stepped out of the camp and looked at the giant trees surrounding

the cats. There were thick, white birch trees, large, arching maple trees, strong oak trees, scrawny pine trees and thin, delicate saplings.

“Hey! Gingerpaw, can you move out of the way? I can’t see anything.” Gingerpaw was standing in the middle of the path and Dogpaw couldn’t see anything.

“Oh. Sorry Dogpaw!” Gingerpaw said and licked his chest with embarrassment as he scooted out ot the way.

“Can we train with Dogpaw and Gingerpaw today?” Redpaw asked Orangefire and pretended not to take notice of the huge forest although her eyes reflected the excitement in the other apprentices eyes.

“It depends on where they are going.” Orangefire answered, “We’re going for a border check.”

“We’re going for some battle training.” Treetail replied.

“I’m taking Gingerpaw for some hunting lessons.” Battleheart told them with an approving nod at his apprentice.

“Okay, well it looks like we’ll be doing different things today. Sorry Redpaw.” Orangefire told his apprentice.

“Oh. It’s okay then.” Redpaw looked a little disappointed.

“Why not next time." Orangefire gently told his apprentice. When Redpaw nodded slowly, Orangefire mewed, "Let’s get going then.” Orangefire led Redpaw towards the SunClan territory, while Battleheart took Gingerpaw hunting, and Treetail took Dogpaw battle training.

Chapter 2

Dogpaw

“Dogpaw, tell me, what are a warriors’ main weapons.” Treetail asked.

“Claws, teeth and … I think that’s it.” Dogpaw replied. The mentor and apprentice were sitting in the old and unused badger den for their first battle-training session.

“Good. Remember that right now we are only practicing battle moves and we are not in real battle, so we keep our claws sheathed. Understand?”

“Yes Treetail.” Dogpaw replied with a nod.

“Okay. Watch carefully.” Treetail said. He swiped his paw over Dogpaw making her duck, but purposely missing. Right after that, he aimed another blow to her legs making Dogpaw not know where to go.

“That’s a common thing to do. First pretend to aim somewhere, but then you actually land the blow some where else. You try.” Treetail explained. Dogpaw thought for a second and suddenly barrelled into Treetail, but Treetail was prepared. He moved over to one side. Seeing that Treetail moved to the right, Dogpaw swiped a paw from the right side to claw at him, but instead, he gave her a little push, and Dogpaw lost balance and rolled over onto the ground.

“How did you know that I was going to swipe at your head?” Dogpaw asked clearly surprised with her eyes glowing in shock.

“Your eyes were looking at my head so I knew you would swipe there. Next time, try looking some where else where you aren’t aimed for.” Treetail told her. Dogpaw shook the dirt out of her brown pelt and tried again. This time, she stared at his hind legs, but charged towards the front. Although she did follow his

instructions, Dogpaw was pinned down to the ground.

“How did you know where I was aiming again?” Dogpaw asked.

“You were too far away, so when you came running over, and I saw you leap toward my front legs.”

“Oh.” Dogpaw tried about two more times before finally managing to get the move right.

“Good work Dogpaw. You did well today.” Treetail told Dogpaw when they finished.

“Thanks.” Dogpaw’s legs were so tired she almost had to drag her self back to camp. Right when she got back, Dogpaw crawled into her new nest that Fluffpaw had made her and went to sleep in the feathery-soft moss.

“Dogpaw! Wake up. It’s sunhigh already!” It was Gingerpaw nudging her. “Treetail wants to see you!”

“Okay… tell him that I’m coming.” Dogpaw groaned. She stretched out her sore legs and peeked outside. The sun was shining brightly high in the sky and she wondered what Treetail planned to do today. “Hi Treetail.” Dogpaw said when she saw Treetail waiting for her. “Sorry, I was too tired. Where are we going today?”

“I’m going to take you on a border patrol.”

“Okay.” *SunClan, RainClan and FieldClan. That’s what the other three Clans are called.* She thought. Dogpaw tried to imagine what the other Clans smelled like as she followed her mentor though the thick undergrowth. *RainClan’s a fishy smell, SunClan’s a… stinky smell and FieldClan is… maybe a grassy smell.*

“Dogpaw, this is the SunClan border.” Treetail explained as they walked next to a small twoleg path way. “On the other side is the SunClan territory. They’re very hostile so I recommend you stay quiet if we meet any of them. That bush over there is where we mark our scent. Why don’t you go.” Treetail waited until Dogpaw finished and they continued towards the FieldClan. *The SunClan cats must be very unfortunate to have such a horrible smell. I wonder how*

they stand it! Dogpaw thought as she scrunched up her nose in disgust.

Suddenly, Dogpaw scented other cats nearby.

“Treetail-” Dogpaw was about to tell her mentor when three SunClan cats burst into the clearing next to the path. There was a large solid brown tom next to another tom with stripes. Beside the striped tom there was a tortoiseshell she-cat with yellow eyes. “Who are they?” Dogpaw asked Treetail, but instead, she was answered by the large brown tom.

“What are you doing on our territory?” He demanded. The tom’s orange eyes were fierce and hostile. The tom next to him was no better, but Dogpaw decided that the she-cat was okay.

“My name is Leafpaw. The striped tom beside me is my mentor Tigerstripe and the tom beside him is Cliftlegs.” Leafpaw whispered to Dogpaw.

“Hi Leafpaw! My name is Dogpaw.” Dogpaw quietly introduced herself to her new friend.

“Treetail! Take your apprentice off of our territory!” Tigerstripes mean growl sent the apprentices quiet.

“We are not on SunClan territory. Everyone knows that the path separates the territory of SunClan and LightningClan. Even RainClan knows.” Treetail told the hostile cats calmly, “You are on SunClan’s territory, we are on LightningClans territory. No one is on incorrect territories.”

“Wrong!” Cliftlegs meowed, “All the way until the berry bush behind you is SunClan territory. You are on our territory! Get off!” He growled. Cliftlegs seemed as if he wanted to fight and it was clear that LightningClan was not going to win. Dogpaw barely knew a single battle move and Treetail had to fight both Cliftlegs and Tigerstripe if Leafpaw was also a new apprentice.

“This side of the path has always been LightningClan’s territory. What right does SunClan have to take it?” Treetail asked calmly,

but his eyes were blazing with anger already as he took a step towards the SunClan border.

“This is my last warning. If you do not get off of our territory right now, we will attack.” Cliftlegs meowed.

“This is our territory. We have the right to stand here. The border is right on top of this path.” Treetail told the SunClan cats, even though he knew that they were no match for the SunClan cats. “Dogpaw, back off.” He quietly warned his apprentice. Dogpaw backed off, but only a little bit. This was going to be her first battle and she wanted to fight.

“Attack!” Cliftlegs yowled to his clan mates. Tigerstripe immediately leaped onto Treetail and pinned him to the ground. Leafpaw flattened her ears and pounced onto Dogpaw. Dogpaw unsheathed her claws and raked them across Leafpaws muzzle, but before she could, Leafpaw barrelled into her and knocked her onto the ground. Leafpaw scratched Dogpaw a few times before letting her go.

“Did you just become an apprentice or something?” She asked eyes narrowed. Dogpaw nodded. “No wonder. You fight like a kit!” Totally offended, Dogpaw leaped onto Leafpaw and raked her claws against the other apprentices flank. Leafpaw yowled in pain which made Tigerstripe come after the apprentices. He swiped a giant paw across Dogpaw’s head and she lost balance. Tigerstripe saw that Dogpaw was no match for Leafpaw anyway and returned to help Cliftlegs. Treetail was struggling to keep up with Cliftleg’s blows and when he saw Tigerstripe returning, he finally gave up.

“LightningClan, retreat!” he yowled. Dogpaw immediately let go of Leafpaw although her claw were still unsheathed, turned and ran. Treetail turned around to leave, but not before snarling, “This is LightningClan territory! We will fight for it!”

Back in the camp, Treetail went straight to Maplestars den to report what had happened at the SunClan border. Meanwhile, Dogpaw just got out of Redheart’s den when she got surrounded by her clan mates.

“Dogpaw! Tell us what happened!”

“Yeah! Were the SunClan cats bad?”

“Did you get hurt?”

“How many cats were there?”

“Where were you when you got attacked?”

“What happened?”

Questions came from all over the place and Dogpaw had no idea which question to answer first. No one even waited for an answer. The questions kept coming and coming until Dogpaw could not stand it anymore.

“Be quiet!!!” She yowled as loud as she could. The cats surrounding her quieted down. “We were confronted near the pathway and-” Dogpaw started, but was interrupted by Maplestar’s loud yowl.

“Would all cats old enough to catch their own prey, gather under the Tall Tree for a Clan meeting!” All the LightningClan cats gathered around, but everyone was wondering what Maplestar wanted them for today. There were no apprentices to make or warriors to make either. “Today as you probably know already, Treetail and Dogpaw met a few of SunClan’s warriors near the border. The SunClan cats claimed a large area of LightningClans territory as theirs." Just as Maplestar finished, caterwauls of complaints came from the crowd.

“Who does SunClan think they are?”

“This is our territory!”

“Let’s attack them!”

Battleheart was standing next to Maplestar and asked,

“Should we attack them?” Maplestar just shook his head and meowed for the cats to be quiet.

“I will decide if we should attack or not later. I’d like to see all my senior warriors in my den.” Maplestar jumped off the Tall Tree and disappeared into his den. Everyone started to mutter about their own opinion about the battle and started to wander off. Battleheart, Treetail, Longlegs, Hawkwing, Skymountain, Tigerfang, Jaypelt and Orangefire huddled in a group discussing something and disappeared into their leader’s den.

Dogpaw went to find Gingerpaw and Redpaw to do something with since her mentor was not here.

“Hi Gingerpaw. Hi Redpaw.” Dogpaw quickly greeted her friends.

“Oh, hi Dogpaw! We were just talking about if we think LightningClan should attack or not. I think SunClan deserves to be attacked, but Gingerpaw thinks LightningClan should talk about it first. What do you think?” Redpaw asked as she lay down on the soft grass.

“I think that LightningClan should talk to SunClan first and if SunClan still wants the piece of our territory, then we’ll attack.” Dogpaw said after thinking for a while. Her eyes glowed with excitement when she thought of having another battle, but she still thought that it was not right to just attack SunClan.

“Humph! Now you think so too? I’m going!” Redpaw lifted her chin and turned around. Gingerpaw looked at Dogpaw, but she just shrugged.

Dogpaw turned to see if Maplestar made his decision yet, just when all the senior warriors left Maplestar’s den. Soon after the warriors came out, Maplestar strode out of his den and leaped onto the Tall Tree. Everyone was very eager to hear Maplestar’s opinion, so Maplestar didn’t even have to call for the clan.

Chapter 3

Gingerpaw

“LightningClan will not attack SunClan yet. Instead, I will take a patrol to SunClan’s camp and talk to Cloudstar. We will be leaving at sunhigh and I will be taking Skymountain, Hawkwing and Tigerfang. Battleheart will lead the Clan while I’m gone. Meeting over!” Maplestar quickly explained his plan to the Clan and leaped off the Tall tree. After Maplestar left with his patrol, Gingerpaw went to a small patch of grass and stretched out his muscles. The bright sunshine warmed his pelt and Gingerpaw dozed off into a light sleep.

“Gingerpaw! Wake up.” Someone was poking Gingerpaw with a carefully unsheathed claw. He slowly opened his eyes and found out that Battleheart was talking to him.

“What?” He wearily groaned as his eyes threatened to close again. Suddenly, Gingerpaw remembered that he was talking to his mentor. Jumping to his paws, Gingerpaw apologized to his mentor. “S-sorry Battleheart, I, I was tired…” He finished his sentence with a long yawn and drowsily shook his pelt his eyes flickering close again.

“I was going to take you for some battle training in case of a battle. There’s a small sandy area close to the camp where we’ll train. Redpaw, Orangefire and Goldenpaw are training too. Follow me.” Battleheart told his apprentice and raced out of the camp after a whisk of his tail. Gingerpaw shook himself again to wake himself up and leaped after Battleheart's disappearing silhouette. After following his mentor for a while, the two of the arrived at a sandy area.

“This is where we are going to train.” Battleheart meowed. Goldenpaw, Redpaw and Orangefire were already there. Goldenpaw, being an older apprentice, was showing Redpaw how to do a battle move, her golden coat shining. Gingerpaw studied

carefully and tried the move. Instead of landing on his paws though, Gingerpaw twisted around and got tangled in a bush. Struggling with the thin, but strong branches, Gingerpaw finally managed to free himself and landed on the sand with a loud thump. Redpaw and Goldenpaw were staring and him and they both started to laugh.

“It’s not funny!” Gingerpaw retorted, “Why don’t you try, Redpaw!”

“Okay.” Redpaw gave Gingerpaw a sly look. Moving to the center of the clearing so she wouldn’t get tangled like Gingerpaw did, Redpaw followed Goldenpaw’s instructions and successfully finished the move twice.

“Gingerpaw, try to stay away from the bushes.” Goldenpaw suggested after looking at both of the younger apprentices with her one green and one yellow eye blazing brightly. Gingerpaw moved into the center of the clearing and tried the flip and drop once more. This time, he didn’t get tangled in a bush, but got stuck up in a low hanging tree branch when he jumped too high. Furiously clawing at the tree branch, Gingerpaw freed himself once more and landed on the floor.

“Look at you! Call your self a warrior? You can’t even jump properly without tangling your self!” Redpaw teased as she stuck out her tongue. Orangefire gave her a disapproving nod and she stopped, although her head was still held high.

“Can we practice something else?” Goldenpaw asked the two warriors. “I think this move is too hard for Gingerpaw.”

“No it’s not!” Gingerpaw hissed through clenched teeth and tried again. Again and again, Gingerpaw kept trying to do the simple battle move, and again and again, he failed. By the end of the training session, Redpaw and Goldenpaw successfully finished two new battle moves with Orangefire while Gingerpaw just barely managed to learn the flip move. All the apprentices were tired, but Gingerpaw insisted on continuing. Goldenpaw, Redpaw and Orangefire went back to the camp while Battleheart stayed with Gingerpaw. They practiced another battle move that requires the flip. Very soon, Gingerpaw was weary and his muscles were aching,

but he continued practicing.

“Gingerpaw, it’s almost dark. It’s time we go back to the camp.” Battleheart told Gingerpaw.

“I want to master this battle move first!” Gingerpaw insisted. “If there is going to be a battle, I don’t want to sit around like a kit! I want to fight!”

Battleheart couldn’t do anything about Gingerpaw’s determination, shook his head, and left for some hunting while Gingerpaw continued getting sand and dirt stuck in his pelt. When Battleheart returned with a thrush and a mouse, Gingerpaw was panting heavily.

“Let’s go back.” Battleheart suggested when he saw how tired Gingerpaw was. No matter how determined Gingerpaw was, he wouldn’t get much further like this. Gingerpaw was to tired to talk and just nodded. When they got back to the camp, Battleheart dropped his prey in the fresh kill pile and took a mouse for himself. Gingerpaw just dragged himself into his cozy nest and went to sleep. Although he tried to sleep, he couldn't fall asleep. All the other apprentices were wondering what he did so late and what happened.

"Hey, Gingerpaw! What did you do?"

"Where'd you go?"

"Everyone was looking for you!"

"Why are you so tired?"

Finally, Gingerpaw couldn't stand it anymore.

"I went training okay?!?!? Now let me sleep!" he yowled. The other apprentices looked a little offended, but they curled up in their own nests and closed their eyes.

"Hey Gingerpaw. Did you really go training all that time?" Someone whispered by his ear with his whiskers brushing his. Just by the coarse voice, Gingerpaw knew it was Fluffpaw. Gingerpaw just

twitched his tail in annoyance.

"Gingerpaw?" Fluffpaw asked again curiousity flowing through his voice.

"Shut up! I told you to be quiet!" Gingerpaw lifted his head and screeched loudly.

"Okay, okay not so loud." Fluffpaw cringed under the loud yowling with his ears flattened. The rest of the apprentices were also annoyed by Gingerpaw's yowling and jerked their heads up to see who it was. After whispering to each other with their muzzles pressed together, the other apprentices lay down again to sleep. Fluffpaw opened his mouth to say sorry, but he thought of what would happen, and decided to be quiet.

Why is everyone so annoying today? Gingerpaw asked himself. *First I mess up training and Redpaw and Goldenpaw laugh at me. Then, everyone doesn't let me sleep. Humph.* Gingerpaw though as he fell into a deep sleep.

He dreamed of a battle where all the clans were attacking each other. Gingerpaw was being clawed by a large orange tom and another brown she-cat was scratching the orange tom. Although the cats all looked very familiar, with brown and black pelts, Gingerpaw didn't recognize any of them. Many of the cats seem to know each other and no matter how hard Gingerpaw studied, there seemed to be no allegiances in the clans. One cat would protect another for one time and attack it the next. Gingerpaw was very puzzled and was trying to figure out what was happening when a small brown she-cat dragged him into the bushes while telling him to come. Still wanting to know what was going on, Gingerpaw twisted out of the she-cat's grip and spun around to find Dogpaw standing in front of him.

"Dogpaw! What are you doing here?" He meowed. "Hello? Dogp-" Gingerpaw's questions were stopped when Dogpaw stuffed her brown tail into his open mouth.

"Shut up." She whispered and carefully removed her now wet tail. "Gingerpaw, have you noticed that all the cats are fighting against

them selves? There are no actual clans and I don't know any of these cats except for you!"

"You're having the same dream too?" Gingerpaw asked.

"I think so. I don't know if this is a simple dream or if it is a message from StarClan because it's not possible that we can talk in our dreams and have the exact same dream." Dogpaw explained her own opinion.

"That actually makes sense! But what would StarClan be trying to say through this battle?" Gingerpaw wondered. Just as Gingerpaw finished his sentence, a muscular, silvery blue she-cat appeared in front of them. Gingerpaw watched the cat, eyes wide with surprise as she started to talk.

"My name is Bluestar. I was once the leader of ThunderClan. This is a message from StarClan. I have a prophecy to give to the two of you. *Rain, Sun, Field and Lightning are enemies like fire and water. Ginger with brown and a well feared animal will save all the clans from far too much blood. If the ginger with brown and the well feared animal fail, then the river will run red with blood.* This is your prophecy. Follow it where ever you go." Bluestar meowed before fading into thin air.

"Bluestar! Wait, tell us more! What are we suppose to do?" Gingerpaw meowed after the fading cat. "Dogpaw," Gingerpaw turned to his friend, "what are we suppose to do?" he asked, but Dogpaw was gone. "Dogpaw where are you?"

"Gingerpaw… Gingerpaw! Gingerpaw!" Someone was urgently calling his name, but as his eyes searched wildly, they couldn't find the source of the voice.

Chapter 4

Dogpaw

“Gingerpaw! Wake up! Gingerpaw!” Dogpaw furiously shook Gingerpaw as she tried to wake the ginger tom.

“What…?” Gingerpaw drowsily opened his clouded eyes. “Dogpaw!” he meowed when he saw Dogpaw there.

“Gingerpaw! Did you have that dream?” Dogpaw urgently asked him.

“Dream? Oh yeah! The dream with the prophecy Bluestar gave us!” Gingerpaw meowed. "Do you think we should tell Maplestar when he comes back?"

"Maybe. Let's first find out what the prophecy means." Dogpaw suggested. "Bluestar never said we couldn't tell anyone, did she? If she didn't then let's go find Redheart and Greenpaw."

Dogpaw and Gingerpaw just stepped out of the apprentices den when Battleheart approached.

"Where are you apprentices going?" He asked.

"Uh, Redheart's den." Dogpaw cautiously replied.

“Are you hurt?” Battleheart asked while circling the apprentices slowly, his eyes glancing from one apprentice to the other.

“N-no…” The two apprentices replied slowly, “We just have something to ask her.”

“Okay then.” Battleheart replied. As the apprentices went into Redhearts den, a deep scent of herbs welcomed Dogpaw and Gingerpaw. Both of them, since they haven’t been in the medicine cat’s den before, just stood there staring at all the dried leaves and twitching their sensitive noses.

“Is there anything I can do for you?” Redheart’s soft voice asked as she peeked out from behind a rock. Dogpaw jumped at the sound and calmed down when she saw that it was Redheart.

“Well, both of us had a dream where we saw a battle with many cats we didn’t know. They were fighting with literally no one. First they would help a cat and then they would attack it!” Dogpaw explained.

“Is this important?” Redheart suddenly asked. “If there isn’t, I have a few herbs to collect.” Lots of the herbs were spread out on the ground and Redheart picked up a few leaves and told the apprentices, “When you’re finished, find me some of these leaves.”

“Wait! Redheart, I’m not finished, later, we met a silvery blue she-cat who told us she was Bluestar. She told us a prophecy.” Dogpaw explained. “*Rain, Sun, Field and Lightning are enemies like fire and water. Ginger with brown and a well feared animal will save all the clans from far too much blood. If the ginger with brown and the well feared animal fail, then the river will run red with blood.* What is that supposed to mean? She told us to follow this prophecy where ever we go.” Redheart looked a little confused. She stood there looking at the sky and finally replied,

“I’m not sure what this prophecy means and I don’t know why StarClan gave this prophecy to you. All I can tell you is that rain is RainClan, sun is SunClan, field is FieldClan and lightning is LightningClan. StarClan might be trying to tell us not to fight anymore.”

“I think that StarClan is saying that if this ‘ginger with brown’ and a ‘well feared animal’ don’t try to stop the clans from fighting, then the river will run red with blood and all the clans will die!” Gingerpaw suddenly said wide eyed. The two she-cats looked at Gingerpaw and then looked at each other.

“I think that make sense!” Dogpaw meowed. “Let’s go ask Battleheart and see if he knows who the ‘ginger with brown’ and ‘well feared animal’ is.” Dogpaw turned to face the exit and raced outside to find Battleheart. Gingerpaw followed behind, but not before telling Redheart,

“We’ll come back for the leaves later!” The two apprentices came to a tumbling stop when Rosepelt popped out of nowhere.

“Where are you two going?” She asked curiously.

“Going to find Battleheart!” Dogpaw panted.

“Excuse us!” Gingerpaw added his eyes wide with excitement. Rosepelt stared at the apprentices trying to figure out what was going on and let them run off to find Battleheart. Battleheart was sitting on a large rock next to the camp entrance. He was looking at the rising sun and muttering something to himself.

“Battleheart!” both Gingerpaw and Dogpaw yowled at the same time. Battleheart leaped to his paw and spun around with the sunshine's glare in his eyes.

“What is it?” He hissed. When he saw that it was just Dogpaw and Gingerpaw he relaxed and sat down again. “What brought you two here?”

“We got a prophecy from StarClan!” Dogpaw explained.

“*Rain, Sun, Field and Lightning are enemies like fire and water. Ginger with brown and a well feared animal will save all the clans from far too much blood. If the ginger with brown and the well feared animal fail, then the river will run red with blood.”* Gingerpaw told his mentor. “We came to ask who you think the ‘ginger with brown’ and the ‘well feared animal’ is.” Battleheart thought for a second before saying,

“I don’t know. I’ve never had a message from StarClan before. Maybe you should ask Maplestar when he comes back.” Battleheart suggested. The two apprentices looked a little disappointed when they heard that they still haven’t found the answer.

Suddenly, the bushes next to the camp entrance rustled and Maplestar and his patrol burst into the camp, paws thumping on the earth. Immediately, many LightningClan cats crowed over.

“What happened?”

“Did SunClan agree?”

Maplestar just ignored their questions and leaped onto a thick branch of the Tall Tree.

“Cats of LightningClan!” he yowled loudly. Clearly something was not right because Maplestar didn’t use the traditional call for a clan meeting. Even so, all the cats of LightningClan came out of their dens to see what was going on. “SunClan did not agree with our opinion of the grassy area as ours. They want to battle for the piece of territory.” Maplestar looked at his patrol near the entrance before continuing, “We have decided that in three sunrises, SunClan and LightningClan will battle for the territory. After three sunrises, any clan can attack the other when ever they want. I think LightningClan should attack first, but we need good timing for that to happen. All the apprentices shall only battle train for now until the battle. We will need a border patrol every second to make sure SunClan doesn’t attack before time. Orangefire, Jaypelt, Shelltail and Eagleclaw, you will be in charge of training all the apprentices. The rest of the warriors will split into two groups. One to strengthen the bramble fencing surrounding our camp and the others will hunt and patrol the borders. I’d like to see my senior warriors in my den.” Maplestar leaped off of the Tall Tree indicating the meeting was over and lead his senior warriors into his den.

The rest of the cats hustled around chattering loudly and discussing about the battle. When the senior warriors came out of Maplestar’s den, Orangefire, Jaypelt, Shelltail and Eagleclaw lead the group of nine apprentices out of the camp for battle training. Tallpaw and Brownpaw recently turned into warriors and earned their warrior names, Tallbark and Brownclaw.

The four warriors led the apprentices to a large area of pine trees and stopped.

“Why are we stopping here?” Goldenpaw asked with her head cocked in curiousity.

“Because if we are attacking on SunClan territory, most of the place would be pine trees. To make sure we are used to their territory, we

will train here today.” Orangefire explained.

"Oh." Goldenpaw sat down with a sigh. "Why do I smell SunClan's scent so close to our border?" The yellow apprentice suddenly asked. The rest of the cats opened their mouths to scent the air, but no one detected anything. Jaypelt shook his head.

"It's probably just because we're close to the border." Goldenpaw didn't relpy, but narrowed her eyes suspiciously.

Chapter 5

Please tell me if you find any mistakes. I didn't bother with editing this chapter. It's a lot more fun writing :) Enjoy!

By the time all of the apprentices were finished with a day filled with training, most of the apprentices were very tired already. Goldenpaw and Dogpaw headed towards the apprentices den while the others took a piece of fresh kill to feed on. . Orangefire, Jaypelt, Shelltail and Eagleclaw went to report how the apprentices had done in their battle training. Gingerpaw, was not even a bit tired. After tearing a few mouth fulls of a mouse, he was up on his paws again. Battleheart was grooming himself casually when Gingerpaw padded over.

"Still not tired?" Battleheart lifted his head and asked the bouncy Gingerpaw. "I'd guess you would be very tired after a day of battle training. All the other apprentices are already snoozing in their nests!" Gingerpaw wasn't even a bit tired and his legs were pacing circles around his mentor. The sun was starting to set and the sky was blazed with streaks of orange and red. Birds were returning to their nests and the forest seemed a lot more quiet.

"Do you want to go hunting?" Battleheart suddenly asked, "It would be nice to stock up our fresh-kill pile before the battle."

"Sure!" Gingerpaw leaped into the air and charged towards the camp entrance. Battleheart ambled slowly after Gingerpaw and followed his apprentice through the bramble tunnel. Leaf-fall was approaching and the squirrels were already busy with collecting delicious nuts for their leaf-bare stockings. Gingerpaw perked his ears as he heard a squirrel chattering loudly nearby. Turning his head slowly, Gingerpaw located the squirrel next to an old willow tree. There were a few acorns at its tiny feet. Gingerpaw dropped into a crouch and slid forwards silently. A group of tall saplings were the perfect cover for stalking the squirrel. Undetected, Gingerpaw got closer and closer to the squirrel. Now that he was close enough, Gingerpaw could see how large the squirrel was. It

could feed all the elders! Suddenly more excited than he was, Gingerpaw fought to keep his tail from twitching and shut his mouth to keep his saliva from dripping out. Almost close enough to attack the squirrel, Gingerpaw accidently stepped on a small sapling. The stem snapped and Gingerpaw froze in mid step. Thankfully, the squirrel was too interested in its acorns to realize it was being hunted. Gingerpaws' hind legs tensed as he prepared to jump. Powerful legs sent Gingerpaw flying forwards right were the squirrel was eating. The squirrel immediately jerked its head up to see a cat flying towards it. Faster than lightning, the fat squirrel dashed up the willow tree with an acorn still wedged between its large, yellow teeth.

Gingerpaw chased after the squirrel unsheathing his claws to grip the tree trunk. Weaving through the overhanging branches, Gingerpaw quickly caught up with the squirrel. From the corner of his eye, Gingerpaw caught a glance of Battleheart at the base of the tree looking up at the two of them. Returning his attention to the squirrel, Gingerpaw gave a powerful leap as the squirrel got tangled in the willow branches. The squirrel gave out a loud squeak when Gingerpaw dug his claws into the squirrels brown pelt. Gingerpaw killed the squirrel with a bite to the neck and dropped it down to Battleheart. Then, he carefully slid down the tree and shook out his leafy pelt.

"Nice catch!" Battleheart gave Gingerpaw an approving look when he came down the tree.

"What do we do with the squirrel?" Gingerpaw asked his mentor with the meaty squirrel dangling from his jaws.

"Bury it. That way on the way back to camp, we can take it." Battleheart replied with a few clawing movements on the ground.

"Oh right! I almost forgot!" Gingerpaw exclaimed as he remembered that Battleheart had told him the same thing last hunting lesson. Gingerpaw dug a hole in the dirt and buried the squirrel. Once Gingerpaw finished burying the squirrel, Battleheart lead the way to search for more prey. Battleheart found a vole near a tree root and started to stalk it quietly. In the previous hunting trip, Battleheart had already explained how to hunt mice, squirrel, vole, birds and

even rabbit. The first prey Gingerpaw had caught was a vole, so he already knew how to hunt them. Since there was not much use in watching his mentor hunt a vole again, Gingerpaw decided to find some more prey himself. Opening his mouth to catch scent of any prey. There was a thrush close by and Gingerpaw quickly located it on a large berry bush. There were a lot of thorns on the berry bush and Gingerpaw decided he didn't want to risk getting hurt on the bush. Hoping the thrush would fly somewhere else, Gingerpaw watched the thrush for a little more.

After just a few heartbeats, the thrush flew off onto a low hanging branch of a birch tree. Gingerpaw quickly dropped back into a crouch, being careful not to step on anything that would scare the bird. Creeping closer to the thrush, Gingerpaw easily leaped onto the thrush and killed it with a quick bite. Getting up the branch was easy, but getting down was not. Gingerpaw managed to kill the bird while staying on the branch. At that time, Gingerpaw thought staying on the branch would be a good thing, but now that he thought of it, it was a lot harder to get down with all four paws cramped on the thin branch. The thrush was safely stuffed in his mouth, so Gingerpaw decided to make a jump down to the ground. Just when he crouched down to spring, the branch swayed under his weight and threatened to snap. Gingerpaw unsheathed his claws again to cling to the bending branch. By then, Battleheart had finished off the vole and was watching Gingerpaw cling to the branch. Amused, Battleheart dropped the vole and walked over to help his trembling apprentice.

"Gingerpaw," Battleheart called to his apprentice, Gingerpaw jumped and flipped around, startled by his mentor's sudden appearance. The thin branch under Gingerpaws paws creaked and snapped. Gingerpaw tumbled down with the thrush still firmly held in his jaws.

"Ow!" Gingerpaw yowled as his flank hit the ground. The branch was under him and Gingerpaw could feel twigs stabbing his pelt. Slowly getting onto his paws, Gingerpaw winced in pain as he managed to stand up properly. Growling loudly, Gingerpaw spat out the thrush and the disgusting feathers. "Stupid thrush." Gingerpaw hissed through clenched teeth. He shook out his fur and

smoothened it down again with a few annoyed licks.

"Let's go back to camp." Battleheart suggested. The sky had already darkened and Gingerpaw just noticed how cold it was. He picked up the thrush by a ruffled wing and stomped after his mentor. They returned to the squirrel Gingerpaw had caught, and the large juicy squirrel reminded Gingerpaw of how many cats it could feed, and he immediately felt a lot better.

Gingerpaw and Battleheart returned to camp with the fresh-kill and dropped it off in the fresh-kill pile. The sky had turned a deep blue colour and most of the cats were already in their dens. Gingerpaw was finally tired and took a small mouse to eat. As he ate, he looked around the LightningClan camp. He was so proud to be part of such a wonderful clan. Gingerpaw couldn't think of a better place to live. *Maybe being a kittypet would be easy going and less tiring, but all the kittypets are probably bored to death! Being a warrior is the best thing ever!* Gingerpaw thought. Maplestar was resting on a patch of grass, watching the clearing with attentive eyes. Battleheart walked over to his leader and whispered a few words to him. Maplestar flicked his ears and nodded. *Were they talking about me?* Gingerpaw wondered with excitement. Maybe his mentor had told Maplestar about how well Gingerpaw had done today, or maybe about the battle. Gingerpaw glanced at the fresh-kill pile, all stocked up and fresh. He was proud of himself, for making himself helpful to his clan.

He stretched out his lean, brown legs and fluffed out his pelt in the light breeze. The stars were shining brightly and the moon was glowing lightly. Today, the moon was only a tiny slit in the sky, like a claw mark. Gingerpaw lifted his head to the sky and wondered how many StarClan cats there were. He was very tired and started to walk back to the apprentices den. His nest felt warm and cozy as Gingerpaw lay down and rested his aching muscles. Gingerpaw could hear Palepaw snoring gently and Redpaw was twitching in her sleep. Too tired to care about anything, Gingerpaw closed his eyes and fell into a dream less sleep.

Chapter 6

I didn't really want to edit this chapter either, so sorry if there are any mistakes.

Dogpaw

Dogpaw twitched her ears with annoyance as a tail brushed her flank. Morning sunshine was seeping through the leaves of the apprentices den. Birds were chirping loudly and Dogpaw heard lots of movement outside of the den. She opened her eyes wearily and looked around the apprentices den. The only apprentice left other than her was Gingerpaw. He was still snoring loudly with his legs splayed out randomly. Dogpaw sat up and carefully groomed herself clean. She stuck her head out of the entrance and narrowed her eyes in the bright sunshine. Once her eyes had adjusted to the light, Dogpaw saw Battleheart arranging the patrols. Spottedlegs, Leopardtail, Dryears and Orangefire were going on a border patrol. Longlegs, Treetail, Fireclaw and Shelltail were going on a hunting patrol. Dogpaw ran over to Treetail and asked,

"Am I coming too?"

"Uh, yeah, I think so." Treetail replied. He gently flicked his apprentices shoulder with his tail, and mewed to her, "You finally woke up! Looks like that battle training wasn't as easy as it seems!" The hunting patrol started to move towards the camp entrance. Longlegs was leading this patrol and flicked his tail to tell his patrol to move forward. Dogpaw shuffled along the pathway slowly at the end of the patrol. Treetail wanted to move to the front of the patrol, but he couldn't stand looking at his droopy apprentice.

"Dogpaw, cheer up! You can't be that tired!" Treetail nudged his apprentices back gently. This only made Dogpaw even more tired and slowed down even more. Frustrated, Treetail nipped his apprentices tail harshly. Dogpaw yelped in surprise and shot forward. Suddenly realizing it was only her mentor behind her, Dogpaw halted sharply and sent dirt flying in front of her paws. She

turned her head and glared at her mentor. Treetail just laughed and stepped up to his apprentice. Longlegs had stopped and told the patrol to start looking for some prey.

"Split up here and search for prey. Once you have a fair amount of prey, come back here to meet up." Longlegs told his patrol. Everyone nodded in agreement except for one warrior.

"Okay, we get it! You're just leading the patrol, it's not like you're now the clan leader!" Shelltail mewed, annoyance heavily in his voice. Shelltail recently recived his warrior name, and ever since then, he's been thinking he's the most experienced warrior in the clan. Dogpaw seriously couldn't understand why her friend, Goldenpaw, always mooned over him. He was totally annoying and ignorant. A pelt brushed hers which brought Dogpaw back to the forest. Dogpaw looked up to see Treetail next to her. He flicked his tail towards a tree stump a few tail lengths away where two squirrels were chattering nosily. *My first hunting lesson!* Dogpaw thought. Dogpaw suddenly felt a lot more energetic. Treetail carefully explained how to hunt different types of prey and told Dogpaw to watch his every move. Dogpaw nodded excitedly and padded quietly after her mentor. Treetail dropped into a crouch silently and started to stalk the squirrels. The thick undergrowth provided great cover for the cats. Dogpaw remembered Goldenpaw showing her the warriors crouch and how it was done. She crouched down and tried copying Treetail to the best of her ability. Treetail moved forwards paw by paw and Dogpaw copied him paw by paw. The squirrels were still chattering with no notice of the warriors in the darkness. Dogpaws brown pelt blended in perfectly with the surroundings even when bright sunlight shone on her. Treetail was only a tail length away from the tree stump when the wind suddenly changed dirrections and the cats' scent floated right into the squirrels noses. The two squirrels imediately dashed for the trees, their mouths making loud barking noises. Treetail tensed and leaped after one of the squirrels. It was a brown squirrel that went up an oak tree. Dogpaw dived after the gray squirrel. Unsheathing her claws, Dogpaw raced up the tree with the gray squirrel was in. The agile squirrel leaped from tree to tree hoping to throw off the cat behind it, but Dogpaw kept up with the squirrel. Suddenly, a bright orange pelt dashed in front of the squirrel. Not knowing

where to go, the squirrel halted on the tree branch temparily. Dogpaw knew that this was her chance to kill the squirrel and leaped at it. She landed squarely on top of the squirrel. The gray rodent squeaked as Dogpaw squashed it with her paws. Grabbing it in her jaws, she swiftly looked up at the cat in front of her. It was a fiery orange cat with well rounded paws and fluffy fur. He didn't smell much like a clan cat and was far to plump to be a loner. Thats when Dogpaw noticed the light blue collar around the cat's neck.

"You're a kittypet!" She hissed loudly and puffed out her pelt, but smoothened it out again. After all, this cat *had* helped her catch the squirrel. "You'd better get out of here before my mentor came!" She told the orange tom. He looked a little confused and just stood there.

"Are you a warrior?" He asked curiously and curled his tail over his paws.

"Are you going to get out of here or not?" Dogpaw hissed through her teeth. She unsheathed her claws preparing to claw the stupid kittypet's ears off.

"No. Not until you tell me if you are a warrior or not." He replied stubbornly. Dogpaw could hear her mentor approaching and dug her claws deeply into the tree bark trying not to attack the kittypet.

"Yes! Now get out of here, quick!" She answered and nipped the toms orange tail. He looked a little offended, but was quickly replaced by excitement.

"Dogpaw, who are you talking to?" Treetail started to climb up the tree.

"Mouse-dung." Dogpaw muttered under her breath. Treetail looked surprised to see the kittypet in the oak tree, but his surprise was replaced by hostility.

"What do you think you are doing on LightningClan territory?" Treetail growled at the kittypet.

"So you are warriors! Can you take me to your camp? I want to

become a warrior too!" This was unusual. *A kittypet who wants to become a warrior. Weird.*

"You? Warrior? I don't think so. Go back to your twolegs before I claw off your ears." Treetail fiercely mewed at the tom.

"Okay then, but I'll come back later. My name is Fire by the way." The kittypet stood up and left the two warriors. He climbed down the tree in a flash and trotted off towards his twoleg home. Dogpaw could barely see his orange pelt when she got down the tree. *Wow he walks fast.* Dogpaw though. Treetail picked up the squirrel that he caught and Dogpaw picked up hers.

"Great catch!" Treetail praised Dogpaw.

"Actually Fire helped me catch it. He blocked the squirrels path so I could catch it." Dogpaw told her mentor. Treetail nodded slowly and lead Dogpaw back to the meeting spot Longlegs had decided. Longlegs had caught a vole and a mouse, Fireclaw brought back a magpie while Shelltail returned last empty-pawed. He claimed it was just bad luck, but the rest of the patrol knew it was bad skill. Longlegs lead the patrol along the dirt pathway leading to the camp. Everyone had their prey dangling in their mouths except for Shelltail who lifted his head high and stomped into the camp. Goldenpaw was out of camp, thankfully, so Dogpaw didn't have to watch her rubbing against Shelltail again. Dogpaw left her squirrel in the fresh-kill pile and went to look for some shade. Redpaw and Leafpaw were splayed out under the shade of the nursery. Dogpaw padded over and joined them in the cool shadow of the tightly weaved nursery. Redpaw and Leafpaw were discusing battle moves when Dogpaw joined. They quickly welcomed Dogpaw and continued with their talk on battle moves.

"I remember that day when I went training with Orangefire, Goldenpaw, Battleheart and Gingerpaw. Goldenpaw was teaching me a cool battle move where you jump and flip around. Gingerpaw came and tried the move. Guess what happened!" Redpaw mewed. Both the other apprentices watched her curiously, wanting to know what happened next.

"Gingerpaw leaped up into the air and got himself tangled in a

bush. Then, he tried again and got caught in an overhanging tree branch. Goldenpaw wanted to try something else that was easier, although I can't think of anything easier than a simple jump, but Gingerpaw insisted on continuing with the jump and flip. So again and again he fail each time and got tangled each time. By the time me and Goldenpaw went back to camp, Gingerpaw still didn't master the jump and flip. How stupid is he? I could do that when I was a kit!" Redpaw sat up and giggled at her own story. Leafpaw broke into a soft laugh. Her soft laugh quickly turned into a loud mewing laughter. Dogpaw didn't think it was a bit funny. She felt sorry for Gingerpaw and admired his determination to get a move right.

"I don't think it's funny." Dogpaw told the other two apprentices. They stopped laughing and turned to look at her. "I admire Gingerpaws determination."

"Admire?" Redpaw and Leafpaw asked at the same time. They looked at each other and burst out laughing again. *Humph. I wonder how I got such a rude sister.* Dogpaw thought and left Redpaw and Leafpaw to laugh themselves. There was a strong scent of herbs coming from the medicine cat den and Dogpaw wondered who was sick again. Dogpaw hoped it wasn't Gingerpaw; that would give Redpaw and Leafpaw something else to tease him about. She trotted over to the medicine den and found Redheart and Greenpaw sorting out herbs.

"Hi Dogpaw!" Redheart mewed quietly without lifting her head. Greenpaw turned from the piles of leaves and quickly mewed 'hello'. "Is there anything we could do for you?" Redheart asked from behind a rocky hollow.

"I was just wondering if there was anything I could help out with around here." Dogpaw explained. She sat down and looked at how busy Greenpaw and Redheart looked.

"There's lots to do in the medicine den. Leaf-fall is coming soon and that means a lot more sick cats. We are low on coltsfoot, cat mint, water mint, goldenrod, poppy seeds and marigold. " Dogpaw's mouth gapped open. That was a lot of herbs. "If you have anytime, go with Greenpaw and another cat to fetch those herbs. Greenpaw

will tell you which herb is which." Redheart stole a look at her apprentice. Greenpaw nodded and looked at Dogpaw. Dogpaw gulped.

"Okay. I'll go and see if Gingerpaw or Treetail is available." Dogpaw ran off in search of her mentor or Gingerpaw. Greenpaw followed behind. Gingerpaw was feeding on a piece of fresh-kill when the two she-cats approached. Treetail was out hunting, so Gingerpaw was their only choice. "Gingerpaw, do you want to go collect some herbs for Redheart and Greenpaw?" Dogpaw asked the feeding apprentice. Gingerpaw licked his lips a few times before muttering,

"Sure."

The three apprentices started to walk towards the camp exit.

"Where are you three going?" Mothflowers soft voice asked as the trio passed the warriors den. Greenpaw flicked her tail towards the medicine den and replied,

"We are very low on herbs and if there is to be a battle, then we will need a stable supply of herbs." Mothflower nodded slowly with concern flickering in her eyes.

"Are you sure it's a good idea for three apprentices to be going out by themselves? Would it be fine with you if I came along too?" Mothflower was clearly concerned for her kit. Dogpaw was annoyed that her mother still thought they were kits, but Greenpaw replied first.

"Sure. It would be great to have another cat to help collect herbs." Sighing, Dogpaw padded towards the bramble tunnel.

"Can I come too?" Goldenpaw raced over to her friend and joined the patrol.

"This is how coltsfoot looks like." Greenpaw explained as she plucked out a leaf from a plant. "Make sure you don't rip the leaf too much or else the juice inside will come out. We don't need too much of coltsfoot, so just collect a few leaves." Dogpaw began picking clumsily at the leaves. Gingerpaw and Goldenpaw were also

tired of picking herbs, but they never complained. Greenpaw had them collect the herbs and wrap them with a large leaf. Then, they would tie the leaf with a long blade of grass and put them in a pile. The three apprentices had already brought back loads of herbs wrapped in leaves about four times. This was their last round of herb picking and all they needed was a little more coltsfoot. The sun was on the other side of the sky from when they first started and everyone was exhausted.

"I'm so happy I didn't choose to become a medicine cat!" Goldenpaw whispered to Dogpaw as she bent down to place the coltsfoot in a leaf. Dogpaw nodded slightly and got back to work.

"I think that's enough." Greenpaw finally said to her four totally bored clanmates. "Let's bring this back to camp."Greenpaw lifted the herbs delicately in her soft mouth and headed back to camp. There wasn't too much coltsfoot to take back, so Greenpaw was able to fit everything in her mouth. Suddenly, Dogpaw caught a whiff of SunClan.

"SunClan!" She mewed urgently. Her clanmates stopped and lifted their noses. There was a heavy scent of SunClan heading towards the LightningClan camp.

"Goldenpaw, Greenpaw and Dogpaw! Go back to camp and alert the clan. Gingerpaw, follow me and see if SunClan is raiding or not." Mothflower immediately ordered the four apprentices to go in different dirrections. Greenpaw, Goldenpaw and Dogpaw raced towards the camp while Mothflower and Gingerpaw stalked towards the SunClan cats.

"SunClan!" Dogpaw gasped as she shot through the bramble tunnel and into the camp. "SunClan is on LightningClan territory!" Cats emerged from dens and padded into the clearing.

"What's with all the commotion?" Skymountain asked from the dirtplace. "Am I missing something again?"

"SunClan is on LightingClan territory!" Goldenpaw repeated what Dogpaw had said. By now, the entire clan had swarmed around the earthy clearing wondering what was happening.

"Did you confirm that SunClan is attacking?" Maplestar asked the panting apprentices. Dogpaw shook her head and Goldenpaw replied,

"Mothflower and Gingerpaw went to check it out." Maplestar nodded and sat down.

"We'll have to wait for their news."

Chapter 7

This chapter is un-edited.

Gingerpaw

Gingerpaw crouched in the tall grass quietly. Mothflower was motionlessly hiding beside him. The SunClan patrol was shuffling loudly in the LightningClan territory.

"I wonder how LightningClan survives in this tangled place." Gingerpaw heard a cat say.

"I know, I seriously wonder how they hunt and train in this place without tripping!" Another cat wondered. Grunts and growls came from the SunClan cats as they slowly moved towards the LightingClan camp. There were about eight cats in the patrol, more than enough for a raid. Gingerpaw could also smell another patrol of at least seven cats making their way up. Mothflower hissed under her breath as she saw how many SunClan cats there were.

Mothflower flicked her tail, tell Gingerpaw to go back to camp as quietly as possible. Gingerpaw backed away slowly and raced towards the camp with Mothflower brushing his flank. The clan was waiting for them and as they burst into the clearing, and the cat s bustled with excitement and concern. Maplestar padded over to Gingerpaw and Mothflower and flicked his tail towards the Tall Tree. Gingerpaw didn't understand what Maplestar meant, but when he saw Mothflower head towards the Tall Tree, Gingerpaw knew that Maplestar meant for them to tell the clan what had happened. Gingerpaw had never addressed the clan by himself, but with another cat with him, he was not as nervous.

"There are two SunClan raiding patrols. The first one has eight cats and the second one has at least seven. We didn't get close enough to the second patrol, but there was more than enough noise for us to hear. LightningClan must prepare for battle!" Mothflower yowled to the clan. The once silent clan suddenly burst into a chorus of curses.

"How dare they?"

"Who do they think they are?"

"Let's fight!"

Cats yowled across the clearing. Littlekit and Hazelkit peeked out of the nursery and was quickly shoved back in.

"I will lead the first battle patrol, while Battleheart will lead the second." Maplestar started to arrange the battle patrols and the clan quieted once more. "In my patrol, there will be Treetail, Dogpaw, Hawkwing, Leafpaw, Eagleclaw, Cloudpaw, Leopardtail and Tallbark. In Battleheart's patrol, there will be Gingerpaw, Longlegs, Tigerfang, Spottedlegs, Fluffpaw, Mothflower, Jaypelt and Goldenpaw. The remaining warriors and apprentices will guard the camp. Redheart, I want you to come with my patrol with some basic healing herbs in case anyone needs help. Greenpaw, you will stay in the camp." The camp split into three groups. Redpaw was staying in the camp, and Gingerpaw saw Dogpaw talking quietly to her. Gingerpaw felt a little sorry for her. He didn't want to miss a single battle, but after all, if SunClan got to their camp, she would be able to help anyways.

"Gingerpaw, be careful!" Gingerpaw heard Snowtail call to him. Gingerpaw rubbed his muzzle against his mothers' and purred gently.

"I will." He replied.

Gingerpaw followed his mentor closely as he lead his patrol out of camp. They were supposed to find the second SunClan patrol and defend them. Dogpaw's patrol was suppose to take the first SunClan patrol. Bounding away after his mentor, Gingerpaw kept up well with the other warriors. They quickly found the SunClan patrol struggling to get through the brambles. They were extremely close to the camp and Gingerpaw found that there were far more cats in this patrol then he had though. There were around nine warrior in the patrol lead by the SunClan deputy. According to Fluffpaw, his name was Brighttail.

"LightningClan, attack!" Battleheart yowled and leaped into action. The rest of the patrol followed closely and raged into battle. A small black apprentice growled and leaped onto Gingerpaw. Reacting with lightning fast speed, he flipped over and flung the apprentice off. Listening to Fluffpaw talk about the only gathering he went to, Gingerpaw guessed that this was Berrypaw. Although the little tom looked small and weak, he had amazing strength. Berrypaw suddenly disapeared and when Gingerpaw looked around for him, he came slashing out of nowhere. Gingerpaw blocked his blows and tried to pin him down. Instead of pinning Berrypaw to the ground, Gingerpaw got pushed to the ground himself. The sleek black tom raked at Gingerpaw's expozed belly. Yelping in pain, Gingerpaw freed his hind legs from Berrypaws grip and slashed at his flank. Letting go of the furious Gingerpaw, Berrypaw attacked again. Thorn-sharp claws pierced his skin and Gingerpaw felt blood seeping though his fur. Hissing and growling, the two apprentices locked claws tightly. Pushing and shoving, Gingerpaw managed to pin the stronger apprentice onto the grass. Gingerpaw scraped his unsheathed forepaws against the black toms pale gray belly. Berrypaw yowled in agony, escaped from Gingerpaw's grip and disapeared into the hostile group of cats.

Gingerpaw looked around to see if any LightningClan cats needed his help. He spotted his friend Fluffpaw struggling underneath a huge tom with thick, messy fur. Gingerpaw raced over to the oak tree where they were wrestling and slashed at the warriors battle-scarred pelt. Scarlet blood splattered all over Gingerpaws paws as he ripped madly at the tom. Fluffpaw quickly recovered and was up on his paws in a flash. Baring his fangs, Fluffpaw and Gingerpaw fought side by side, their moves matching perfectly. The messy brown tom was an experienced fighter and easily blocked all of the two apprentices attacks. Gingerpaw suddenly remembered Battleheart teaching him battle moves and one particular move that was to be used on a warrior bigger that him. Dodging the toms sharp claws, Gingerpaw dashed behind him and raked his back. Then, just as the warrior was about to scrape at him, Gingerpaw raced to the side and slashed at the toms flank.

Hissing at the tom, Gingerpaw raised his fur and looked about as twice as big as he was. Fluffpaw copied his friend and fluffed out

his long fur. Fluffpaw suddenly looked like a porcupine with thin, long quills.

"Raggedshell! Let me help you!" A cat yowled out of the slithering group of cats. A shadowy gray she-cat approached Raggedshell's side and snarled at the apprentices.

"Thanks Swiftstorm!" Raggedshell gave a thankful mew to his mate and hissed growled at the two apprentices. Gingerpaw and Fluffpaw instinctively fluffed up even more at the sight of another lean SunClan warrior. Swiftstorm and Raggedshell sprang at the same time, each taking an apprentice. Gingerpaw dodged Swiftstorm's thorn-sharp claws and raked at her flank leaving a deep scratch. The agile she-cat leaped up and flipped around while she stuck out her paw and caught Gingerpaw's tail. Yowling in pain, Gingerpaw spun around and barreled into the gray she-cat. Surprised at Gingerpaw's weird attack moves, Swiftstorm staggered backwards and reared up. Seeing that the she-cat was trying to scare him, Gingerpaw also reared up on to his hind legs, except he wasn't very used to standing on hind legs and toppled onto Raggedshell. Gingerpaw's sudden apperance clearly stunned the ragged tom and Gingerpaw managed to get a few good blows before he felt sharp claws dig into his pelt. Swiftstorm was back on four paws and was dragging Gingerpaw away from her mate. Gingerpaw flipped around and bit down on the she-cat's thin muscular forelegs. Tasting blood in his mouth, Gingerpaw bit down harder and let go. Swiftstorm yowled in agony and tore back her injured forepaw.

"SunClan, retreat!" Brighttail yowled to his clan. SunClan cats slithered away from the slashing LightningClan claws. Gingerpaw watched in triumph as the SunClan patrol raced away from LightningClan territory, crossed the thunderpath and returned to their own territory. Battleheart's triumphant battle call rang out clearly through the forest. The rest of the patrol joined in with the yowling. Then, Gingerpaw's mentor lead the patrol back to camp. None of the LightningClan cats were injured badly and everyone was chatting with excitement to the cats next to them. Gingerpaw nudged Fluffpaw affectionitly and mewed, "That was awesome! Don't you think so? I wonder how Dogpaw's doing." Fluffpaw nodded and continued on the path towards the camp. Gingerpaw

smoothened down his bloody fur with his rough tongue and cleaned his face with his paw. Then, he raced into their camp with Fluffpaw on his heels.

Chapter 8

Sorry if this chapter is too short. I couldn't think of anything else to write. Please read and vote!!

Dogpaw

Dogpaw followed Treetail closely as Maplestar lead the patrol quietly through the undergrowth. SunClan was easy to scent since they were upwind from the LightningClan patrol. Dogpaw shook out her head, trying to get the stench of SunClan out of her nose. The SunClan cats were making large amount of noise as they scrambled through the thick, bushy undergrowth. Maplestar easily found them and signaled to his patrol, telling them to spread out. Dogpaw followed Treetail and quietly stopped behind a thicket. Not noticing the LightningClan cats that surrounded them, the SunClan cats continued on with their slow going walking. Dogpaw rearranged her position silently so she could get a glimpse of her leader behind the tall oak tree. Managing to get into a position where she could see Maplestar, Dogpaw crouched lower and tensed her hind legs. Waves of aggression came off of the awaiting LightningClan cats.

Dogpaw waited a little, but Maplestar didn't give the signal to attack yet, so she started to study the stinking group of cats. The cat that was leading this patrol was a white she-cat with sky-blue eyes. Dogpaw admired the strength rippling through her shoulders as she ambled forwards. The rest of the warriors were also strong and hard-muscled, but Dogpaw was not afraid of them. She knew just well that LightningClan was much stronger than them, and was bound to beat them easily. Just as Dogpaw spotted Leafpaw, the young apprentice she met last time, Dogpaw caught a flick of a tail from the corner of her eye.

"Attack!" A loud yowl sounded the air and LightningClan cats sprang out of their hiding spots and onto the unexpected SunClan cats. Stunned, the SunClan cats stared in astonishment at the sudden appearance of the rival cats.

"SunClan! Don't stand there like kits! Attack!" A fierce voice caterwauled through the tense air. Suddenly aware that they were being attacked, the mouse-brained SunClan cats jumped into action. Dogpaw had leaped into battle, trying to stay as close to Treetail, but she soon lost sight of her mentor. A bright yellow she-cat which Dogpaw guessed to be Sunpaw sprang onto Dogpaw and clawed at her flank. Dogpaw snarled at the other apprentice and flung her off. Sunpaw quickly regained her balance on the rough, dirt earth and flung herself at Dogpaw once more. Anticipating Sunpaws' attack, Dogpaw dodged to the right, just a whisker away from Sunpaws' unsheathed claws.

While Sunpaw caught air, Dogpaw reached out a paw and raked a long scratch along Sunpaw's flank. Yowling with pain, Sunpaw crouched down and steadied herself. Then the yellow she-cat leaped high into the air, right over Dogpaw. Not knowing what the SunClan apprentice was trying to do, Dogpaw lifted her hackles and tried to keep track of the bright yellow patch of fur above her.

Suddenly, Sunpaw swiped her tail sideways and flipped around. In that heartbeat, she rang out a battle screech, and scraped her claws across Dogpaw's back. Whipping around, Dogpaw hissed furiously at the more experienced apprentice and prepared for the next attack. Sunpaw leaped forward once more in a yellow streak with her claws outstretched. Dogpaw flattened herself to the ground and Sunpaw flew over her, fur brushing. Near Sunpaw's landing, Dogpaw suddenly stood up again and caught Sunpaw unbalanced and the yellow apprentice rolled off. Stopping a fox-length away from Dogpaw, Sunpaw curled her lip into a snarl and glared at Dogpaw. Glaring back, Dogpaw's powerful hind legs pushed off the ground and tore at the yellow piece of fur in front of her. Instead of dodging away, Sunpaw met Dogpaw with claws. Totally unexpected claws raked across Dogpaw's shoulders and pinned her to the grassy earth.

Thrashing around, Dogpaw clawed at the other apprentice, but couldn't dislodge the prickly claws.

No matter how hard she tried, Sunpaw wouldn't release her tight grip. Instead, she answered Dogpaw with a low growl.

"Is this how they train LightningClan apprentices? No wonder they lose all the battles!" Sunpaw sneered and Dogpaw could feel her hot breath breathing all over her muzzle. Dogpaw snarled enraged, and started to squirm around again.

"I will leave you no mercy and neither will the rest of my clan." Sunpaw hissed in a mocking tone and lunged for Dogpaws' throat.

"No!" Dogpaw's terrified screech caught in her throat. Petrified, Dogpaw closed her eyes and prepared for jagged fangs to meet her neck, but after waiting for a few heart beats, Dogpaw felt Sunpaw's weight thrown off her chest. Cautiously opening her eyes, still frightened to see white fangs in front of her. To her disbelief, Cloudpaw had barreled Sunpaw over and was slashing at her yellow pelt.

Dogpaw's legs were still shuddering from the daunting thought of getting killed, but forced her legs to stand up. Then, she wobbled around a little, and calmed herself down. Leaping into action, Dogpaw resumed to attacking Sunpaw. Now that Cloudpaw was helping, defeating Sunpaw was a lot easier.

"Thanks." Dogpaw muttered to Cloudpaw as he brushed pass her.

"She was going to kill you!" Cloudpaw hissed back at Dogpaw and fluffed out his short fur and a wave of embarrassment came off of him as if he was embarrassed that she was thanking him. Dogpaw couldn't understand why he was embarrassed, but just as she was going to ask him, Sunpaw reminded her of the presence.

"Mangy-furballs!" Sunpaw spat and hurled herself into Dogpaw. Bracing herself for the attack, Dogpaw crouched down and struck Sunpaw claws first and thrusted her down to the ground. Cloudpaw's attack followed closely after and scored his claws across Sunpaw's exposed pale belly. Sunpaw shrieked in agony and scrambled back to her paw. Ruffling her scarlet and yellow pelt while bristling her hackles, Sunpaw curled her lips in a snarl, revealing sharp, white teeth.

A large black tom with ragged markings on his tail approached Sunpaws side and let out a low, rumbling growl. Dogpaw laid back

her ears and fluffed out her pelt. Cloudpaw was doing the same with his short white fur when they saw the huge, battle-scarred warrior.

"Need any help?" the tom growled to his bleeding clanmate. Sunpaw nodded and replied,

"Thanks Darkshadow. Let's get rid of these mangy cats!" Pelts brushing, Sunpaw and Darkshadow leaped at the same time, each taking on a cat. Dogpaw was struck by the sudden strength in the apprentices attack and staggered backwards with the force. Golden paws and thorn-sharp claws raked against her muzzle and Dogpaw tasted blood in her mouth. Sunpaw pinned her down once more and threatened to tear out her throat. Clearly the rest of SunClan was not doing as well as Sunpaw and Darkshadow were, because a loud yowl cut through the air.

"SunClan, retreat!" The white she-cat Dogpaw noticed earlier must have been the leader of SunClan, for it was she who called off the attack. Sunpaw glowered at Dogpaw and unwillingly backed off. Then, the yellow apprentice raced off after the rest of the fleeing SunClan cats.

Caterwauls of triumph split the air. LightningClan formed a tight line as if trying to scare off the remaining SunClan cats.

"SunClan will take back the strip of grass within a moon!" The snowy white leader of SunClan yowled at the LightningClan cats before turning away, and ran off into the pine trees.

Dogpaw's ear was torn and deep scratches were scored across her flank. She unsheathed her claws into the soft earth and lashed her tail wildly. Redheart was already hurrying around her battle-ready clan mates as she tended their wounds and made sure everyone was okay. Hawkwing had an ugly slash down his shoulder, Leopardtail had a bloody muzzle with a series of scratches along her back and even Redheart had a claw mark across her ear. Other than a few scratches, most of her clanmates were fine, but tired.

After Redheart put some poultice on her ear and the deepest scratches, she headed over to Cloudpaw to thank him again.

Cloudpaw's icy eyes were round with excitement and his black ears were twitching around.

"Cloudpaw!" Dogpaw's mew called out to the white tom and he turned around in surprise. Eagleclaw, Cloudpaw's mentor, was talking to him with a deep growling tone. Dogpaw caught a few words about SunClan and the attack. "Cloudpaw! Thanks for helping me today! I would have been crow-food if you hadn't helped."

Cloudpaw nodded and licked his fluffed-up chest fur. Embarrassment flooded though his voice as he replied,

"Any warrior would have done so." Dogpaw cocked her head, puzzled, while Eagleclaw narrowed his eyes suspiciously at his apprentice, then Dogpaw.

"Cloudpaw, let's go back to camp." Then, he looked towards Dogpaw. "You can go too." With a flick of his tail, Eagleclaw rounded his apprentice towards their trailing clan mates and Dogpaw followed behind.

Treetail was mewing softly to Leopardtail and Tallbark as they padded forward on drowsy legs. After her mentor finished, Leopardtail and Tallbark nodded with approval. Triumph shone in the three warrior's eyes and Dogpaw wondered what they were talking about. Quickening her speed, Dogpaw caught up with the warriors and fell in beside her mentor.

To Dogpaw's disappointment, they had stopped talking. A thick, gloomy silence hovered over the cats as they followed their leader through the brambles. Suddenly, a piercing yowl broke through the unbreakable silence.

"FieldClan invasion!"

Chapter 9

HERE'S THE NEXT CHAPTER. (Sorry, it was on cap's lock) And sorry if it came a little late. I didn't write much these days.

Gingerpaw

Gingerpaw opened his mouth to taste the air as an undistinguished scent filled his nose. "Battleheart, what's that smell?" Gingerpaw turned to his mentor, but he already had his nose in the air, sniffing the scent wildy. Suddenly, his mentor's blazing amber eyes lit up with surprise and screeched loudly to the resting camp.

"FieldClan invasion!" Battleheart shot around the camp warning the clan of the danger and Gingerpaw followed as closely as possible. Soon after, most of the clan was bristling in the clearing, wondering where the rival clan was. Maplestar's patrol came streaming into the camp just heartbeats before the FieldClan cats burst in.

"LightningClan, attack!" Maplestar mewed as loudly as he could to his panicking clan. "Shelltail, Blazeheart, Treetail, Dogpaw, Palepaw, guard the nursery! Dirtpelt, Eagleclaw, Leopardtail, Mothflower, guard the elders! Tallbark, Hawkwing, Redpaw, Orangefire, guard the medicine den! The rest of us, shred these rabbit-chasers!" The furious LightningClan cats slashed at the rival cats in their camp. Gingerpaw was lost in the whirling pack of vicious cats and quickly locked into battle with a fierce black apprentice with patches of white all over his pelt. The lean apprentice swung out a claw and battered Gingerpaw's ears. Hissing, Gingerpaw flung himself onto the moving black pelt and scored his claws across the apprentice's sleek flank. Biting down on Gingerpaw's rust-coloured tail, the black apprentice dislodged Gingerpaw easily.

"Come on Blackpaw! These mange-pelts are so easy to attack!" A dusty gray tom mewed mockingly to the black apprentice.

"I know! Graypaw, don't you think it's like fighting kits again?"

Blackpaw teased on.

"Mange-pelts yourself!" Gingerpaw spat. Rearing up onto his hind legs Gingerpaw raked his thorn-sharp claws across Blackpaw's scornful face. Crimson blood splattered the ground and Gingerpaw's claws were stained red. Yowling with pain, Blackpaw spun around and flipped over Gingerpaw's head. Soaring across the air, Blackpaw aimed a heavy blow to Gingerpaw's spine and hissed in triumph. Gingerpaw felt blood welling up in the scratch Blackpaw gave him and whirled around angrily. Baring his teeth in a tight snarl, Gingerpaw leaped at the FieldClan apprentice and bit down onto his shoulder. Blackpaw screeched in pain and twisted around viciously. Gingerpaw hung on the blood-soaked shoulder of the apprentice as Blackpaw thrashed around wildly trying to get Gingerpaw off. Suddenly, a strong paw clawed Gingerpaw away and he turned around to find a bright orange apprentice slashing away at his muzzle. Gingerpaw backed off and blocked of as many blows as possible.

Finally the orange tom stopped and turned to lick Blackpaw's bitten shoulder.

"No one messes with my brother." The apprentice growled as he flattened his ears at Gingerpaw.

"Thanks Firepaw." Blackpaw mumbled under his breath, embarrassed that he needed his brother to help him. Shaking out his bloody pelt and splattering blood on the ground, Blackpaw marched towards his brother and planted his paws in the ground next to Firepaw. Firepaw fluffed up his fur, making himself look twice as big as his brother next to him. Lashing his tail furiously, Gingerpaw stepped back as he prepared to claw the apprentices.

Suddenly, a fuzzy gray pelt flashed beside him and Gingerpaw turned to see his good friend, Fluffpaw, bristling next to him. Hissing, Fluffpaw launched himself onto Blackpaw and Gingerpaw slashed at Firepaw. Their bright orange pelts blended into each other as they tussled and wrestled on the dusty earth. Gingerpaw twisted away from Firepaw's awaiting claws and leaped again onto Firepaws shoulders. The battle before with SunClan had tired him out, and Gingerpaw was easily pushed away by Firepaw. Claws tore

at where Swiftstorm had once clawed and Gingerpaw felt heavy paws pushing him onto the bare earth.

Out of the wriggling mass of fighting cats, a huge creamy-brown pelt leaped out and onto a low branch of the Tall Tree.

"Leapstar! How dare you attack our camp?" A furious yowl split the air and every cat went silent. The crowd of cats separated to reveal a pale yellow tom with three black paws and one white. The FieldClan leader was leading the patrol and he stood in the middle of the clearing, hackles raised. Leapstar curled his lips into a ugly snarl and hissed,

"LightningClan raided our camp nine moons ago for absolutely no reason. Fernstar brought over half of LightningClan right into the center of our camp and killed my deputy, Icespot. Today, FieldClan will attack LightningClan and kill without hesitation!" Leapstar's loud reply rang clearly throughout the camp. Fernstar had been the previous leader of LightningClan and died three moons before Gingerpaw was born. Maplestar, Mapletail at the time, had taken over and lead LightningClan onto a better route, but memories remained, and FieldClan chose to attack at just the right time; right after SunClan did.

"When the moon rises, FieldClan will leave." Leapstar finished his last sentence and jumped onto the branch Maplestar was on. Growling, the two leaders landed on the ground and circled each other noiselessly. The FieldClan and LightningClan cats tensed their muscles as they prepared for the battle to continue on.

Leapstar lashed out at Maplestar and Maplestar ripped back. The clan cats exploded onto battle right on cue as their leaders wrestled together.

The sun was setting and soon, FieldClan would be leaving LightningClan territory. Blackpaw was ontop of Gingerpaw and he flipped around instinctively. The black tom pinned Gingerpaw to the grass and Gingerpaw tried to wriggle out. Blackpaw held on with thorn-sharp claws and Gingerpaw decided to try another trick Gingerpaw, Redpaw, Dogpaw and Fluffpaw had used as kits. He lay limp as if defeated and Blackpaw loosened his grip. Just as

Blackpaw remembered this was a very old and common trick LightningClan used, Gingerpaw leaped up, threw Blackpaw off of himself and pinned the other apprentice to the ground. Tearing at the exposed belly fur with unsheathed claws, Gingerpaw felt clumps of blood and fur cling to his claws. Flinging the debris off, Gingerpaw snarled into Blackpaw's scratched face and raked at his ears. Blackpaw screeched in pain and fled from Gingerpaw's claws.

Cats were raking each other's pelts and digging fangs into each other's flesh. Yowls of agony sliced through the tense air. The sun had set and the moon was starting to rise. The horizon in which the sun had disappeared from was streaked with red and the side which the small slit of the moon rose from was a deep blue colour.

Suddenly, a shriek of agony burst from the nursery. A low moan came soon after. *Something was happening in the nursery!* Gingerpaw realized. Then, a small brown head popped out of the nursery and yowled into the sky,

"Lillynose is kitting!!!" Redheart, who was taking care of an ugly bite on Cloudpaw's shoulder, hurried over to the tight bundle of bramble stalks with a few herbs clamped in her mouth and disappeared into the nursery. Fireclaw, Lillynose's mate, flung off a warrior, and raced towards the nursery to make sure Lillynose was okay.

"FieldClan, go home!" Leapstar's mew sounded through the air and paw's pounded as FieldClan left LightningClan's camp, spitting.

"Battleheart, Gingerpaw, Orangefire, Redpaw, go and make sure FieldClan leaves our territory." Maplestar told his clan mates as he made sure everyone was not bleeding to death. Battleheart padded slowly towards the exit and Gingerpaw followed. Orangefire was just behind with Redpaw scurrying to catch up with the patrol.

They followed the FieldClan scent trail and it lead way off into their territory. Clearly, FieldClan only wanted to get back at LightningClan for attacking them moons ago. Battleheart lead the patrol back to camp where Redheart and Greenpaw were busy applying ointment and making sure every cat was all patched up.

"Hi Gingerpaw, hi Redpaw!" A cheerful mew sounded behind them. Dogpaw emerged from the nursery and was bounding towards them. "Lillynose had two kits! Fireclaw named the smaller one Littlekit and the brownish one Hazelkit. Lillynose let me lick Hazelkit clean, and she's so cute!" Redpaw rushed over to Dogpaw's side and inspected her clawed side.

"Did you get Redheart to check this?" Redpaw asked her sister.

"No."

"Then you'd better go. It looks really bad!" Redpaw mewed and gently licked the wound.

"It doesn't even hurt!" Dogpaw purred, "Look at your ears!" Dogpaw pawed lightly at Redpaw's battered ears. Gingerpaw left the littermates to fuss over themselves while he trudged over to Greenpaw to get his wounds inspected. Greenpaw cleaned his cuts and wrapped his punctured tail with a few loose cobwebs.

"Go get some fresh-kill and rest yourself." Greenpaw suggested once she finished. Gingerpaw obeyed and grabbed a dirty mouse off of the fresh-kill pile. He quickly demolished the prey and licked his muzzle clean. Then, he padded towards the apprentice den, wincing as a branch raked across his ragged flank. He lay down and quickly fell asleep, despite Palepaw's snoring.

As he slept, Gingerpaw had a dream in StarClan again. This time, instead of Bluestar, a fiery orange tom approached him, introducing himself as Firestar. It was a brief dream and in it, the only thing Firestar said was,

"Don't forget about the prophecy, Gingerpaw. Your destiny is laid ahead. You must follow it."

Early sunshine seeped through the leaves of the apprentice den and chattering birds woke Gingerpaw up. Most of the apprentices were still dozing in their nests, but Dogpaw and Cloudpaw seemed to have something else in mind. Rubbing his eyes and quickly grooming himself, Gingerpaw stretched out his aching muscles as he padded out of the den. The dawn patrol just got back and a

hunting patrol was being formed. Trotting slowly towards his mentor, Gingerpaw waited until Battleheart had finished arranging the patrols and asked what he could do today.

"Why don't you help check the elders for ticks!" Battleheart purred, "I'm sure you've done that before. Just remember to wash your paws after you deal with the mouse bile. I'm leading a border patrol, so you're on your own." Groaning as he recalled the disgusting encounter with mouse bile and ticks, Gingerpaw dragged his paws towards the medicine den to collect some mouse bile.

"Got lots of ticks?" Redheart had teased him when he padded in and asked for mouse bile. Gingerpaw was in the elders den with a gang of flea bitten, grumpy elders. This time, they were complaining that no apprentices had come to pick their ticks for so long. Swifteyes was telling a story of how he had beaten off a huge dog single pawed when he was younger. Gingerpaw listened intently with his ears pricked as he plucked a plump flea off of Velvetnose's pelt.

"When are you goin' to pick out my ticks?" Crankylegs complained when Swifteyes had finished his story.

"In a moment." Gingerpaw answered as he finished off the last tick on Velvetnose's fur. Squatting down next to Baldears, he found a nest of fleas dancing around on the remaining clumps of fur.

"Hey! I thought you were doin' me next!" Crankylegs yowled loudly and jolted Gingerpaw away from Baldears.

"But Baldears has a whole bunch of fleas!" Gingerpaw protested.

"You think I've got no fleas? Let me tell you young lad, I would love to pick my own fleas, but these horrible creatures always hide where I can't reach!"

"But-"

"No buts with ol' Crankylegs!" The brown tabby tom growled.

"It's okay, you can go on with Crankylegs. There's a reason why he changed his name into *Cranky*legs. He's always got a temper." Baldears mewed. Growling in annoyance, Gingerpaw padded over

to Crankylegs and began to pick at his fleas and ticks.

"Young cats. Never listen to what their told." Crankylegs muttered through a mouthful of vole. Gingerpaw pretended not to hear and continued on with the flea picking.

Finally, all the elders had been picked free of ticks and were resting in their nests. Gingerpaw stretched out his legs and went to see what there was in the fresh kill pile. Just before he reached it, a distressed screech erupted through the clearing.

"Littlekit's gone!"

Chapter 10

Here's the next chapter. Sorry if it's too long. I had a lot to write.

Dogpaw

Littlekit's gone? Dogpaw wondered as Lillynose yowled to the camp with her remaining kit, Hazelkit, tucked under her belly.

"Littlekit's gone!" She yowled once more. Fireclaw, who was resting in his nest, came rushing out and was at her side in an instant.

"Littlekit's gone?" He asked, his glazing, yellow eyes wide with fright. His mate nodded, her green eyes just as wide as his. looked towards Treetail for his permission to take his apprentice out. Treetail nodded in approval and mewed,

"I'd like to come too."

Battleheart stepped up and told the forming patrol,

"Take Gingerpaw. It'll be a good experience traveling through our territory. I'm going to send out another patrol to look for him from the other side of our territory. Snowtail, Dryears, Blazeheart and Tigerfang, go from the SunClan territory." Battleheart nodded towards Dogpaw, Fireclaw, Treetail and Gingerpaw. "Go from the other side." The two patrols headed off in different directions and Fireclaw broke into a run in search for his son.

"Littlekit!" He yowled.

"Littlekit!" The rest of the patrol joined his desperate calls for the young kit.

"Littlekit! Littlekit! Where are you?" Suddenly, the ferns rustled and the little gray kit squirmed from out of the plants.

"Fireclaw!" He squeaked with delight when he spotted his father in

front of him.

"Littlekit! Where did you go?" Fireclaw mewed crossly at his kit, but his angry growls faded into purrs of happiness. "Well, we found you, so let's go home." Fireclaw nuzzled his kit and grasped him by the scruff. Keeping Littlekit off of the ground, Fireclaw trailed at the end of the group of cats as they trotted back to camp.

The heartbeat Dogpaw entered the camp, Lillynose scrambled up with Hazelkit scurrying after, and asked,

"Did you find him? Did you find him? Where's Littlekit?" Her eyes dodging frantically through the two patrols that just returned, she spotted Fireclaw standing contently at the end of the patrol with Littlekit crouched submissively in front of him.

"Littlekit!" An angry yowl sounded from Lillynose and she rushed up to the young kit. "Never ever go out of camp like that! You have to be an apprentice to leave the camp, and you have to tell me first!" The concerned queen scolded her kit with a frown splayed across her face. Crouching lower, Littlekit flattened his ears guiltily and mewled,

"I'm sorry Lillynose. I promise I won't ever do that again before I become an apprentice." Satisfied with Littlekit's apology and grabbed Littlekit by the scruff. Then, the queen flicked her tail telling Hazelkit to follow and disappeared into the nursery.

Dogpaw felt a pelt brush hers, and opened her jaws to scent Gingerpaw next to her. His soft fur warmed her pelt in the whistling leaf-fall wind.

"They're so cute, don't you think?" Gingerpaw mewed quietly to Dogpaw. Nodding, she padded over to the fresh-kill pile and picked up a ragged-pelt squirrel from the pile.

"Want to share?" Dogpaw dropped the squirrel in front of an old tree stump and Gingerpaw settled in beside her. Tearing a mouthful of the squirrel, Dogpaw enjoyed the late afternoon sunshine. Stretching out her legs in front of her, she tore another piece of the prey. As she finished the last bits of her share, Gingerpaw sat up

and began to groom himself. *Shouldn't Gingerpaw be hungry after picking out ticks for the grumpy elders?* Confuse, Dogpaw offered the rest of the squirrel to Gingerpaw.

"Aren't you hungry? Picking out ticks from a bunch of grumpy elders is not easy." Pushing the remaining bits to the ginger apprentice, Dogpaw cocked her head as Gingerpaw pushed the prey back.

"I'm not hungry. The mouse bile ruined my appetite." Shrugging, Dogpaw finished the pieces of squirrel and began to lick her flank in the right direction. Searching for Littlekit had messed up her pelt in the thickness of the brambles.

"I had a dream last night." Gingerpaw suddenly said. "Firestar, once leader of ThunderClan, came to me and told me not to forget about the prophecy." When Gingerpaw didn't say any more, Dogpaw asked,

"That's it? Did he say any more?" Shaking his head, Gingerpaw continued cleaning his fur. "Well, that does remind me, because in all this stuff happening, I almost forgot about the prophecy. Hey, don't you think it would be a good time to tell Maplestar about the prophecy right now?"

"Sure." Gingerpaw stood up and padded over to Maplestar who was resting in the shade of the Tall Tree. Following closely behind, Dogpaw started to think about what to say to Maplestar.

"Greetings, Gingerpaw and Dogpaw. What brought you two here?" Maplestar stood up and stretched out his legs. Dogpaw looked at Gingerpaw and Gingerpaw looked back at her.

"Uh, can we go to some where more private?" Dogpaw asked cautiously. Nodding, Maplestar flicked his tail towards his den. Walking in, Dogpaw felt a tremble of excitement flow through the air between the two apprentices. Dogpaw sat down next to Maplestar's nest and Gingerpaw sat in front of Maplestar.

"One time in a dream, we saw a lot of cats fighting without alliances. Then, Bluestar came and told us a prophecy. *Rain, Sun,*

Field and Lightning are enemies like fire and water. Ginger with brown and a well feared animal will save all the clans from far too much blood. If the ginger with brown and the well feared animal fail, then the river will run red with blood." Dogpaw told Maplestar.

"What do you think the 'Ginger with brown' and the well feared animal is? Redheart told us Rain, Sun, Field and Lightning are the four clans, but what about the rest?" Gingerpaw added to Dogpaw's explanation. Maplestar thought for a moment before asking,

"Do you two know how the our clan's became the clans we are now?" Dogpaw and Gingerpaw shook their heads in confusion. "In a place not far away from here, there are another four clans that thrive like we do. ThunderClan, ShadowClan, RiverClan and WindClan. ThunderClan cats were wise and respected the warrior code far more than the other clans. They lived in forest and hunted mice, squirrels and birds. ShadowClan was a sneaky clan that loved the night more than the other clans. They lived in muddy pine forest and hunted lizards and frogs." Dogpaw and Gingerpaw sat down and listened intently to Maplestar's story. Dogpaw wrapped her tail nicely around her paws as Maplestar continued. "RiverClan was the clan that loved water. They lived near rivers and hunted fish. WindClan cats are strong, agile runners. They lived in the moors and hunted mainly rabbits."

"That's a lot like our clans!" Gingerpaw gasped as Maplestar finished introducing the clans. Nodding, Maplestar continued on.

"There were battles and truces like we do, but they lived on well. Although there had been problems like twolegs logging their forest, they survived and thrived. Soon, all the clans had too many cats. Their territories could not hold all the cats and Bramblestar, leader of ThunderClan at the time, decided that a few cats from each clan should go find another place to live and form new clans. At first, the other leaders disagreed and thought this would just be like sending their warriors to their deaths. Then, leader of RiverClan, Mistystar, took the idea a different way. She thought that enough cats went, they could survive and help lower the cats in each clan. Mistystar and Bramblestar managed to convince the other leaders to send a few of their warriors and create new clans. ThunderClan had the least amount of cats that went. Only four warriors and two

apprentices went. Their one of them was a well-known cat named Dogfoot and her mate, Gingertail." Dogpaw and Gingerpaw gasped as they heard names so similar to their names. Flicking her ears in confusion, Dogpaw cocked her head, interested in what was going to happen next.

"Each clan was to think of a name for their own clan. ThunderClan thought of LightningClan, ShadowClan thought of SunClan, RiverClan thought of RainClan and WindClan thought of FieldClan. Then, they traveled here, where we are now, and made their homes here. Gingertail became first leader of LightningClan, Streamtail became first leader of RainClan, SunClan's first leader was Flameheart, and FieldClan's first leader was Rabbitnose. Our clans formed and only one or two generations of cats have passed since dawn of our clans. Of course, we still have some connection with ThunderClan, ShadowClan, RiverClan and WindClan, for example, the Moonpool that they use is shared with us, and the medicine cats from all eight clans meet up there every half moon. If ThunderClan, for example, needed our help, than we would held, because after all, without ThunderClan, there would be no LightningClan." Dogpaw stared at her leader in astonishment, her eyes as wide as full moons.

"Gingerstar, first leader of LightningClan, like all other first leaders, had his nine lives cut short. There were many dangers lurking around here and he risked every life for his clan. Many kits were born in that short period of time, and among them, there was a tom named Narrowshade. Narrowshade was a fierce, brave and loyal warrior, also the kit of Gingerstar and Dogfoot. Gingerstar had chosen Dogfoot to be deputy, but she died soon after Gingerstar lost his fifth life. At that time, Gingerstar decided that Narrowshade was the best deputy and after Gingerstar died, Narrowstar became leader. Of course, to keep the clan alive in such harsh condition, everyone was busy having kits. Narrowstar's first apprentice was a cat named Fernpaw. Fernpaw made a great warrior, but never took things fairly. Unfortunately, Narrowstar never saw that and made Fernheart deputy. Fernheart was my mentor and after she became leader, she decided that I should be deputy. As you know, Fernstar made many mistakes attacking other clans, for example, FieldClan, which caused them to attack us now. At that time, there weren't as

many dangers and she live to be a lot longer than the previous leaders. I was hoping that things would get better, but there are even more threats to the clan than I'd expect!" Maplestar shook his head as if shaking out memories and continued on.

"I just hope that I have chosen a good deputy that will lead LightningClan on a better track. Dangers are still around and we must survive."

"Maplestar, Maplestar!" Suddenly, an urgent voice floated into the leaders den. Hawkwing popped into the den with Leafpaw close behind. Giving a brief nod to Dogpaw, his daughter, Hawkwing explained that a few cats from ThunderClan were in the camp. Maplestar's eyes perked in interest at the mention of the topic that was just discussed about. Nodding towards the three apprentices, he flicked his tail telling them to follow him. Dogpaw padded after Maplestar, trying to keep her excitement down. The air around the three apprentices were thick with anticipation as they peered around the camp in search for the visitors. Three tight-muscled warriors were seated in the center of the camp and dipped their heads in greeting as Maplestar strode over.

"You must be Maplestar." A long-haired white she-cat said once her clan mates raised their heads.

"And you are Icecloud?" Maplestar inquired after a brief nod.

"Yes. I'm Icecloud. This is Molepaw, my apprentice," Icecloud flicked her tail towards a young tom next to her, "And this is Dovewing." Dogpaw watched the ThunderClan cats carefully. Dovewing and Icecloud seemed to be more of senior warriors, almost elders, but Molepaw was younger and looked very playful.

"Is ThunderClan in any trouble?" Maplestar asked in a welcoming tone. Most of the clan was out in the clearing, looking curiously at the newcomers, for not too many ThunderClan cats visited their territory. The elders padded out and Dogpaw saw recognition flash through Baldear's eyes.

"Dovewing! Icecloud!" The black tom called out to the ThunderClan cats. Icecloud and Dovewing turned their heads and their eyes

widened with surprise.

"Faddedwhisker! What happened to your ears?" Baldears ducked sheepishly and replied,

"They got bitten by a dog. I'm called Baldears now."

"Baldears? What type of name is that?" Molepaw asked out loud. Icecloud cuffed her apprentice around the ears with a sheathed claw and growled,

"Don't say that! It's not nice!" Flattening his ears, Molepaw muttered sorry and backed off.

"Sorry Baldears, my apprentice can be very rude sometimes." Baldears shrugged, looking offended and sat down next to Velvetnose. The battered tom had been on an expedition to ThunderClan and it wasn't surprising that he recognized some friends.

"So, what does ThunderClan need from us?" Maplestar's mew was more curious this time about why the ThunderClan cats were here. Dovewing dipped her head respectfully and replied,

"A lot of our warriors have caught greencough and many cats have died from it. We cannot find any cat mint on our territory, since ShadowClan stole them all." Dovewing hissed the last sentence as if it were a mad dog attacking the camp. "We desperately need catmint or else all of our clan will die of it. Bramblestar has already lost his eighth life to the sickness." The LightningClan cats gasped at the news of the deadly sickness that spread through ThunderClan. When Molepaw started to name which cats got sick and which ones died, even Redheart's eyes widened with surprise. Clearly, ThunderClan was not going to survive without catmint.

Maplestar looked towards Greenpaw and Redheart and gave them a look, asking them if there was any catmint we could offer. Redheart whispered something to Greenpaw and the medicine apprentice slid behind a rock. Soon, she returned with a large bundle of herbs in her jaws and dropped it in front of Icecloud.

"That should be enough. If you need anymore, just come and ask." Greenpaw returned to her mentor's side as Icecloud delicately lifted the herbs into her mouth. Dovewing turned to Maplestar.

"Thank you Maplestar. We will not forget how LightningClan helped us this time. If LightningClan needs anything, ThunderClan will be more than welcome to offer it to you." Dovewing dipped her head low to the ground in thanks to LightningClans generous offer. Maplestar flickered his ears, dismissing the ThunderClan cats and the visitors padded out of LightningClan's camp.

"Hawkwing, Leafpaw, Mothflower, escort them to their territory. I don't want the catmint wasted just because a dog attacked them." The named warriors scurried out of camp, following the ThunderClan cats. Recently, a few dogs had strayed around their territory. They were attacked and driven off LightningClan territory, but they could return anytime soon.

"Lillynose, was that really ThunderClan that you were telling us about?" A shrill voice squeaked on the other side of the clearing. Littlekit and Hazelkit were bouncing around Lillynose and she looked as if she needed a break of the kits. Dogpaw bounded over and offered to take care of them while the queen rested.

"Oh thank StarClan! These two are driving me crazy! Thank you Dogpaw." As Lillynose padded towards the fresh-kill pile, Dogpaw started to circle the kits.

"Pretend I'm a SunClan warrior that's about to kill you!" Dogpaw flashed her teeth at the kits and they squealed in delight. The two young kits yowled and hissed as Dogpaw continued to circle them. Suddenly, Littlekit lashed out a paw and pushed Dogpaw backwards. Regaining her balance quickly, Dogpaw gently batted Littlekit away with a sheathed paw. Then, Hazelkit leaped high into the air and lands on Dogpaw's head. Shrieking in surprise, Dogpaw shook Hazelkit off and the kit lands on the ground with a thump. Hazelkit gave a yelp of pain and lay still on the soft green grass. Gasping with horror that she might have killed Hazelkit, Dogpaw ordered Littlekit off her and crouched down beside Hazelkit. Gently nudging the she-kit with her nose, Dogpaw realized the kit was still breathing. *Thank StarClan I didn't accidentally kill her!*

"Hazelkit? Are you okay?" Suddenly, the little she-kit giggled and flipped up onto her paws. As fast as lightning, Hazelkit leaped onto Dogpaw's muzzle and clawed her way up. Paws frozen with shock, Dogpaw managed to fling Hazelkit off without any chance of injury.

"Hazelkit! Don't do that ever again! I thought you were dead!" Dogpaw scolded the innocent looking kit with a paw gently pinning the kit down. Hazelkit pouted her face, but agreed not to play that trick again. Playfully, Hazelkit leaped onto Littlekit and they scrambled around on the ground. Wrestling like the playful kits they were, Dogpaw watched them with amused eyes. Purring happily, Dogpaw was forced to drag Littlekit off his sister when they started to hurt each other.

"Why do we have to stop? I just got her!" The little kit growled and pounced on a ball of moss.

"Let's play moss-ball!" Giving a happy yelp, Littlekit threw the moss ball as far as he could and a piece of moss got caught in his unsheathed claw. The moss ball was a small, green blob in the late afternoon sky as it soared towards Dogpaw. Jumping high into the air and stretching out an unsheathed paw, Dogpaw grabbed the ball in mid-air and landed on four paws. Hazelkit gave a fierce tiny growl and hurled herself onto the moss ball. Tossing the green blob just out of the she-kit's reach, Littlekit scrambled around on the earth, causing dust to fly through the air as he tried to catch the moss. Hazelkit dodged around Dogpaw who was trying to block her, and reared up into the air, just in time to catch the moss ball. Before attacking his sister, Littlekit gave an adorable sneeze and struck Hazelkit with a furry of paws. Hissing aggressively, the two kits circled each other waiting for their opponent to make one fatal mistake...

"Got you!" Hazelkit suddenly mewled as she pounced on Littlekits' tail. He shrieked in mock agony and leaped onto his sister. The tabby and gray kits wriggled around thrashing wildly as they tackled each other madly. Finally, Hazelkit broke out of the fight and hid under Dogpaw's belly.

"Hide me!" She whispered and flattened herself against the apprentice. Dogpaw purred as she tucked in her paws, blocking the

she-kit from the tiny tom's view.

"Hey! Hazelkit! Come out here. Don't be mouse-hearted!" Littlekit searched the bramble bushes and all around the nursery, but he couldn't find his littermate. Suddenly, Littlekit opened his mouth scenting the air. Nose to the ground, he snuffled his way towards Dogpaw.

"Careful, I think he found you." Dogpaw warned the kit under her. Littlekit spotted Hazelkit's tabby coat and pounce at Dogpaw. Purring with entertainment, Dogpaw thrust her way between the two kits and mewed for them to stop.

"Stop fighting. You two will both make great fighters! LightningClan is lucky to have such natural

warriors!" Beaming in the praise, Hazelkit puffed up her chest. In less than a heartbeat, Littlekit was on top of Hazelkit, pawing at her face.

"Hey, stop it!" Hazelkit yelped as she raked her brother back. Growling, the kits broke up into another fight.

"I'm going to make a better warrior than you will!" Littlekit hissed between breaths.

"No! Lillynose always said *I'm* going to become a better warrior that you!" Hazelkit retorted with a swipe at his nose.

"You two! Stop fighting. I'm sure you'll both make great warriors." Dogpaw turned to see Goldenpaw padding over to the wrestling kits. Purring with relief that someone had come to help, Dogpaw shook out her messy pelt and wondered how Lillynose managed to cope with this. In the mean time, Goldenpaw had Hazelkit grasped in her mouth as the two youngsters tried to continue fighting. Dogpaw walked over and herded Littlekit away.

"Both of you are going to be the best warriors LightningClan ever had, okay? Now stop fighting." Goldenpaw's voice was steady and calm, but Dogpaw could tell she was getting impatient with the kits.

"But I want to be better than Littlekit!" Hazelkit complained once

Goldenpaw put her down.

"You'll both get nowhere if you wrestle around like idiots and don't listen to anyone!" Dogpaw growled. She had enough of these kits and was ready to claw their ears off.

"No more fighting, understood?" Dogpaw glared at each kit and they flattened their ears guiltily. Nodding, they both sheathed their claws and curled their tail around their paws. Feeling a little guilty that she scared the kits, Dogpaw gave each kit a on the nose and nuzzled them towards Lillynose who was sharing tongues with Rosepelt.

"Go get some fresh-kill for Lillynose and Rosepelt, and remember, don't cause any more trouble!" The kit's trotted off and Dogpaw was left with Goldenpaw.

"I can't wait until they become apprentices and don't need us to take care of them!" Dogpaw exclaimed as she flopped down on the grass.

"Don't forget, I might end up mentoring one of them!" Goldenpaw remarked. Stretching out her legs after that tiring work with the kits, Dogpaw lifted her muzzle to look at the sky. Light pink streaks covered one end of the sky and orange blobs dotted the horizon. The bright yellow sun was started to fall as the pale outline of the moon started to rise on the opposite side. Light puffy clouds splattered the colourful atmosphere and they looked so soft and comfortable. Dozing off to sleep, Dogpaw was awoken up by a pit full screech.

Chapter 11

Here's the next chapter. I hope you enjoy it. Plz vote and comment on anything you like or dislike!

Gingerpaw

Another yowl split the air. Gingerpaw opened his mouth and tasted blood. Maplestar was on his paws with Battleheart bristling at the entrance. A low growl rumbled in his throat as Gingerpaw scented blood even closer. Suddenly, three bloody figures exploded into the clearing. They were so battered that Gingerpaw almost couldn't tell who they were.

"Hawkwing, Leafpaw, Tigerfang! What happened?" A demand from Maplestar told Gingerpaw who they were. *Hawkwing? Tigerfang?!? Wow! What happened to them?* Gingerpaw stepped forwards, puzzled about what could cause the two battle-ready warriors to become so defeated.

"Dogs near the river!" Tigerfang gasped as he collapsed onto the pathway. Bristling furiously, Battleheart immediately volunteered to be on a patrol to chase them away. Nodding, Maplestar directed Blazeheart, Palepaw, Brownclaw and Jaypelt to join the deputy. Gingerpaw bounded over, wondering if he was coming too. Watching the enthusiasm in his apprentice's eyes, Battleheart agreed to let Gingerpaw join them.

"Wait! Gingerpaw, you can't go!" A fluffy white pelt burst from the crowd and blocked Gingerpaw's way.

"Snowtail!" Gingerpaw was surprised that it was his mother blocking his way.

"Battleheart, you can't let him go. He's barely had a few days of training!" Snowtail thrust her white muzzle until it was barely a few whiskers away from Battleheart's.

"Are you saying that I'm too weak?" Growling in defense of himself, Gingerpaw turned on his mother. Snowtail whirled around viciously, glaring at Gingerpaw with her blue eyes like chips of ice. Gingerpaw knew it was just because she was afraid he would get hurt, but he couldn't help getting mad at her for not letting him go with the patrol.

"I'm not a helpless kit anymore! I can defend myself!" Hissing angrily at Snowtail, Gingerpaw lashed his orange tail back and forth furiously. "I know it's because you love me," Gingerpaw's mew was more gentle now, but anger still burned within it. "But you can't stop me from going where I want!" The watching cats regarded the mother and kit silently as they fought over whether or not Gingerpaw was allowed to go on the patrol.

Snowtail opened her mouth in another retort, but Jaypelt pushed his way over. Gently placing his tail on his mate's shoulder, Jaypelt comforted the queen with his careful words.

"Snowtail, Gingerpaw may be our first kit, but you can't treat him like a helpless scrap of fur forever. I promise I'll protect him and he'll come back safely. Now you go and get some fresh kill." Jaypelt nuzzled Snowtail towards the fresh-kill pile and she gave Gingerpaw one last loving look before turning towards the prey. Their every move was stalked by the watchful eyes of the clan as they gathered up everything that happened.

"Stop staring at us!" Jaypelt snarled at the watching cats around them as their glowing eyes followed them. "Don't you have anything better to do?" The clan slowly backed away as if reluctant to leave the interesting scene. Purring forcefully, Jaypelt licked Snowtail softly and she pressed her muzzle to his. Gingerpaw's father gave his mother a last lick before racing over to the restless patrol and apologized for the wait up. Battleheart flicked his tail impatiently and wriggled through the entrance tunnel. Gingerpaw bounded after his mentor and Jaypelt followed up closely behind. Blazeheart and Palepaw took up in the rear and the patrol lopped towards the rushing river next to the SunClan border.

The twilight moon reflected softly into the blazing eyes of the patrol. They were ready to take on the dogs and their fierceness

shone from their eyes.

Sudden barking warned the cats that the dogs were coming. Battleheart skidded to a stop down the slope next to the river as the three enormous dogs erupted from the trees on the other side. One of them was a huge shaggy, black and white male. His jaws lolled opened and large, yellow fangs showed through his mouth. The next was a slightly smaller dog with erect ears. Her thick short fur was mostly tan with black markings along her back. The female dog's thin long legs raced towards the cats, a snarl covering her black face. The third was the biggest of them all. He was a huge, black dog with thick, long fur that was ragged and messy. Gingerpaw shuddered as he imagined having those fangs latched onto his neck.

Battleheart yowled a battle call and bolted straight towards the dogs. The rest of the patrol followed close behind and screeched as they launched onto the dogs. Gingerpaw aimed for the smallest, the female, and grabbed onto her stubby tail. Blazeheart scraped her claws across the dog's jet-black shoulder and it snapped it's jaws around, catching Blazeheart on the ear. Gingerpaw tightened his grip around the dog's black tail and raked his claws across her flank. Suddenly, the she-dog whirled around and pinned Blazeheart and Gingerpaw down, each with a paw. Tongue lolling freely, jaws wide open, teeth glittering yellow, the dog snarled at the two cats under her paws.

Gingerpaw struggled under the blunt claws of the dog and he raked his thorn-sharp claws over and over across the skinny, and yet muscular leg of the black and tan dog. Blazeheart was doing no better. As she wriggled around and scratched at the dog, huge snapping jaws would drip saliva on the she-cats' face and teeth narrowly miss her nose. *StarClan help us!* Gingerpaw gazed at the star-speckled sky as the long, yellow fangs reached towards his throat. Sealing his eyes shut, waiting for the moment when the teeth met his throat, Gingerpaw suddenly felt the weight lift off him. Daring to open his eyes a crack, they flew open as he saw Jaypelt, his father, snarling in rage at the she-dog as he sliced through her fur with unsheathed claws. Stumbling to his paws, a sudden black and white flashed in front of him. Stepping backwards

to give his mentor a little room with the furious dog, Gingerpaw nimbly dashed behind the dog and nipped at its' hind legs. Spitting in fury, Gingerpaw hooked his claws onto the dog's white back and clambered onto its' head. Preparing to tear out the dog's eyes, the brute underneath Gingerpaw gave himself a massive shake and sent Gingerpaw spiraling to the ground. Stunned, Gingerpaw lay trembling there for a heartbeat. Blazeheart and Jaypelt were working side-by-side against the strong black and tan she-dog. Palepaw and Brownclaw were wrestling with the huge, shaggy, black dog. Battleheart was furiously swiping at the white and black dog. For a second, Gingerpaw thought the clan cats were winning, but when he looked again, he saw that his clan mates were tired and weary and the dogs were gradually defeating them.

Suddenly, Gingerpaw hear a low snarl and the white and black dog bowled Battleheart into his apprentice.

"Gingerpaw! Go back to camp and bring reinforcements! We aren't going to win this right now." Battleheart hissed at his apprentice as the dog leaped onto them again. Unsheathing his bloody claws once again, Gingerpaw's mentor slashed at the dog's belly.

"But-" Gingerpaw was about to complain when his mentor snarled at him again.

"Go right now!" Knowing that it would be better if he went sooner, Gingerpaw leaped to his paws and raced back into the thick forest. Galloping as fast as he ever ran, Gingerpaw leaped over a tree that had fallen in his way. The rough, gnarled branched hooked onto Gingerpaw's hind legs and he stumbled when he landed. Wincing in agony as pain shot through his leg, Gingerpaw gave it a shake and hurried on. Bursting through the camp, he was quickly greeted by Maplestar.

"What happened? Where are the rest of them?" Eyes wide with worry for his warriors Maplestar circled the ginger apprentice anxiously.

"They're still with the dogs! The dogs are huge and fierce. We need more cats to help out!" Gingerpaw mewed between gasps. Maplestar nodded and ordered Mothflower, Fireclaw, Orangefire, Redpaw,

Eagleclaw and Cloudpaw to go and help. The chosen warriors stepped forwards eagerly and followed Gingerpaw out of the camp. Running at full speed, Gingerpaw charged towards the SunClan border where the river ran. Snarling, the rest of the patrol bustled forward and attacked the three intruding animals. Slashing and clawing, the new wave of clan cats battled the dogs and gave encouraging nods to each other. Before Gingerpaw could even throw himself into battle, his clan mates had drove the dogs off. Cloudpaw, Fireclaw and Mothflower pelted after the dogs, making sure they were far off LightningClan territory. The remaining cats hustled together and licked their wounds. Jaypelt padded over to Gingerpaw and asked if he was okay. Nodding Gingerpaw mewed,

"Thanks for getting that horrid dog off me today! I would have been crow-food if you hadn't done that in time." Purring softly, Jaypelt licked a scratch between Gingerpaw's ears and mewed,

"You're welcome. You made me very proud today when you stood up to Snowtail. She's always a little over protective, but sometimes that can be good." Gingerpaw was warmed by Jaypelt soft fur and purred happily to himself. As he started to lick at his deepest wounds, Mothflower, Cloudpaw and Fireclaw returned with a smirk on their faces.

"Those filthy creatures won't be back anytime soon!" Cloudpaw growled as he swiped his paw in mid air, as if batting away a dog. Battleheart walked around the battle-scarred cats and made sure everyone was fit to go back. Then, he trotted towards the canopy of leaves and disappeared into the forest. The rest of the two patrols followed behind while murmuring to each other as they padded.

Gingerpaw opened his mouth to scent the refreshing, cool forest air as he limped along the path. His shoulder started to hurt again from when he tripped over the log. Suddenly, he tasted something different in the air. Lifting his head to the air, he asked Cloudpaw, who was beside him, what it was. Cloudpaw scented the air and suddenly yowled,

"Fox!"

Chapter 12

Any mistakes?

Dogpaw

Dogpaw was stalking around the camp, waiting for the patrols to return. Disappointed that she wasn't chosen on the second patrol to drive out the dogs, Dogpaw had hung around the medicine den and talked with Greenpaw until she was tired of smelling the strong scent of herbs all over the place. Finally planting herself next to Greenpaw again, Dogpaw growled as she sat on a stick hiding under leaves. Kicking the branch away angrily, Dogpaw realized how fast leaf-fall was coming in. Just yesterday there hadn't been a single leaf on the ground, but now, the ground was dotted with small drifts of leaves. It seemed like only a quarter moon ago that all the trees were green, and yet now, the deep blue sky was behind a series of beautiful, colourful leaves. Some were golden, others were red. One tall maple tree in the camp was a beautiful, bright red colour.

Sighing, Dogpaw lay down on one of the leaf piles accidentally flinging leaves onto Greenpaw.

"Hey! What was that for?" Before Dogpaw could say 'mouse', the medicine apprentice had a bundle of leaves in her paw and hurled it at the brown apprentice, scattering the leaves and sent them fluttering in the wrong places. Laughing, Dogpaw squirmed under one huge stack and shook out her pelt, sending bright leaves flying all over. Greenpaw grabbed a few more leaves and threw them at Dogpaw when a loud, irritated voice screeched behind them.

"Hey! I took the entire day making that pile because the elders thought there were too many leaves near the elders den!" Dogpaw cringed and ducked her head guiltily. Greenpaw whirled around, sending more leaves soaring into the air. It was Goldenpaw, one of Dogpaw's best friends. Crouching even lower when the yellow apprentice glared at her, Dogpaw managed a small 'sorry' before her

friend broke into another snarl.

"Do you know how much time it took me to make that? I would have been on a hunting patrol and went on a training session if it wasn't for this pile and now you two mess it up! All that hard work for nothing!" Goldenpaw's green eye glittered menacing and for a heartbeat, Dogpaw thought her friend would attack her.

"I'm telling Maplestar!" Goldenpaw growled and stalked off towards Maplestar who was sharing tongues with Skymountain in the twilight moonlight.

"Goldenpaw! Wait!" Dogpaw scurried towards her friend, but Goldenpaw ignored her and started to talk to Maplestar. Greenpaw glanced at Dogpaw and managed a mrrow of laughter.

"Sorry. I guess I shouldn't have done that, but that was fun!" Dogpaw shook her head.

"No. It was me who jumped into the pile of leaved Goldenpaw made. It's my fault." Sighing, Greenpaw gave herself a quick lick and mewed,

"Well, we'll see what our punishment is." Maplestar padded over with a glare of amusement in his eyes. Skymountain was behind him, clearly disappointed with what they had done. Goldenpaw was stalking behind them and she looked as if she was happy that Maplestar was going to do something.

"Greenpaw, Dogpaw, I'm very disappointed in you two for what you did to the leaf pile today. You shouldn't be fooling around when you could be doing something useful and Goldenpaw spent a lot of hard work trying to make this pile and appeal the elders. I've decided what until you should do." After a long pause and a glance at Goldenpaw he stated the punishment.

"Until you remake this pile and finish making the rest of the leaves in the camp into a pile, you will not be allowed to leave the camp unless either me or one of your mentors allow you to." Maplestar gave the two apprentices a hard stare and asked, "Understood?"

"Yes Maplestar." Greenpaw answered immediately. Dogpaw just nodded and glanced at the leaves in the camp. There was an awful lot to do and Dogpaw wondered whether or not they could finish putting all the leaves into a pile. Maplestar watched the apprentices thoughtfully as they dragged themselves across the clearing. Dogpaw groaned, and shuffled towards the leaves while swishing her tail to make a pile. Greenpaw was growling at a leaf that brushed her nose and she exploded another pile of leaves with a loud sneeze. Letting out another sigh, Dogpaw started to work on a bundle of dainty, little red leaves.

Flicking her ears as she caught a rustle, Dogpaw sensed that cats were close to the camp. Standing up and scurrying to the entrance, she was greeted by Battlehearts' patrol that went to drive out the dogs. They were bleeding and wounded and Dogpaw scooted out of the way as Redheart pushed her way over.

"Greenpaw, come here!" Redheart called to her busy apprentice and the dark she-cat padded over.

"Go fetch some cobwebs. Blazeheart has a deep cut on her flank. Bring some marigold for infection too." Redheart dismissed Greenpaw with a swish of her tail as she continued tending to the injured cats. Dogpaw's eyes flittered from one cat to another until she found what she was looking for.

"Redpaw!" Yowling her sisters name, Dogpaw bounded over happily and nuzzled Redpaw affectionately.

"You're okay!" Dogpaw purred happily and brushed her pelt against the other apprentices'.

"Of course I'm okay! You should have seen the look on that ugly dog's face when our patrol burst through the clearing!" Redpaw mewed with enthusiasm and bounded up to Mothflower as she approached. Mothflower licked Redpaw with a shine of proud flashing in her round eyes.

"I'm so proud of you..." Mothflower suddenly caught sight of a deep gash on Redpaw's flank and her eyes lit up with worry. "Go to Redheart right now! You need to get that cut fixed!" Mothflower

pushed her daughter towards the medicine cat and let go only when Greenpaw bustled over with a few cobwebs on her paw. Then, Mothflower turned to Dogpaw. At first, Dogpaw didn't know what her mother wanted, but when Hawkwing padded over with an angry snarl, Dogpaw immediately knew that it was trouble.

"So, Dogpaw, why don't you tell me what you were doing when I was on a late hunting patrol." Her father's tail lashed furiously back and forth with his eyes lowered in a glower. When Dogpaw didn't reply, Mothflower spoke up.

"I heard from Maplestar that you caused some trouble when we were gone." Mothflower flicked her ears towards the scattered leaf pile on the ground. Dogpaw crouched lower.

"Let her speak for herself!" Hawkwing snarled. A sudden glint of moonlight caught Dogpaw's eye and she saw the unsheathed claws of Hawkwing digging deep into the soil. Shuttering, Dogpaw started to explain what had happened with Goldenpaw's leaf pile.

"And what did Maplestar do about it?" Mothflower asked, clearly wanting to know what the clan leader had decided as a punishment for the two naughty apprentices.

"To clean the entire camp of leaves before we're allowed to leave the camp." Narrowing his eyes, Hawkwing nodded and stalked towards the warriors' den. Mothflower swiped her tail towards the apprentice's den and followed her mates paw steps. Dogpaw stayed there in place where she thought about how easily she had gotten off for their actions and padded to a dark shadow at the end of the camp. Drawing her rough tongue over her back, Dogpaw groomed herself clean and finished off her face and whiskers with a soft paw. Stretching out her legs, Dogpaw walked towards the apprentices' den and carefully stepped over sleeping cats into her own nest. Curling up comfortably, Dogpaw closed her eyes and fell into a light sleep.

A thick scent of herbs swirled towards her nose and Dogpaw twitched her nose in annoyance. Turning to the other direction, she let out a snore. A light brownish muzzle poked her flank and a whispery voice sounded close to her ear.

"Dogpaw! Wake up. Maplestar wants us to start right now!" A the mention of the clan leaders name, Dogpaw jolted upright and cocked her head in confusion as Greenpaw's yellow eyes bore into hers. Yawning widely, she suddenly remembered what had happened the previous day. Groaning inwardly, Dogpaw stumbled out of the apprentice's den just behind Greenpaw. Hissing in astonishment as she saw just how many extra leaves had been added to the camp ground, Dogpaw flopped down on the leaves and spat angrily.

"Why do we have to do this?"

"Maybe because you deserved it?" A familiar and yet oddly cold voice answered her question from the brambles. Jerking her head up, anger flashing wildly in her eyes, Dogpaw searched for who had made the offensive remark. A light golden pelt flickered at the edge of her vision and her friend padded slowly up to her.

"Goldenpaw!" Dogpaw gasped. Twisting her head to follow the older apprentice as Goldenpaw circled her with long, lopsided strides, Dogpaw found herself trembling with fury.

"Why don't you get started like that fox-breath over there is doing?" Goldenpaw exclaimed as she thrust her head towards Greenpaw, who was furiously trying to pile leaves. Dogpaw's jaws gaped in horror as Goldenpaw's words sunk in. The yellow apprentice had once been her friend. Now, she was acting as if they were enemies for life. Sighing heavily when she couldn't find a response, Dogpaw started to sweep the leaves together. Her mouth felt as dry as one of the shriveled leaves she was collecting, but she wasn't allowed out of camp until the piles were finished. If only she could sneak out of camp...

"Come on, hurry up! Are you going to wait until twilight?" Goldenpaw's growl pulled Dogpaw out of her thoughts.

"Are you suddenly my mentor?" Dogpaw hissed back.

"Nope, but Maplestar said I could supervise your work and I'm gonna make sure you don't get lazy. Now mouse-brain, get working!" Oh great. Now there's no escape. Goldenpaw is going to

watch my every move. Dogpaw thought as she speed up a little.

"Need a little help watching these fur balls?" Dogpaw whirled around to find Shelltaill standing in front of Goldenpaw. The apprentice smiled sweetly and stalked up to the young warrior while rubbing against him.

"Of course!" She murmured. Dogpaw hated watching the two of them. Especially Goldenpaw. How could she stand that annoying fur ball and even like him? Turning her back to the pair, Dogpaw scuffed up dust as she finished a small mound and left a circle of empty soil. Moving to the center of the camp, she swept the leaves to the side and out of the way.

A hot, musky breath was on her neck and long, stiff whiskers were brushing her back. Dogpaw could even feel the fierce gaze locked on her as she figured out it must be Shelltail behind her. Lowering her head out of his reach, she shifted the leaves into another pile next to the previous one.

Suddenly, she felt a pelt brush hers and she spun around furiously.

"Shelltail, would you-" Her sentence was cut short when she realized it wasn't Shelltail next to her. A gleaming ginger pelt whisked around her and a rusty tail told Dogpaw it was Gingerpaw.

"Need help?" Gingerpaw whispered. "I got Shelltail to go on a patrol."

Sighing in relief Dogpaw eagerly accepted the help and they got to work. The three apprenticed worked hard and by sun high, they were finished the camp, panting and hot. Greenpaw lay down next to a fern and Dogpaw stretched out her legs.

Looking around at all they'd done, Dogpaw noticed that the dried up mounds were formed in a perfect circle all around the camp with many spaces that led to the dens and the camp entrance. Proudly shaking the bits of leaves off her pelt, Dogpaw cleaned herself just as Treetail and Battleheart arrived an amused look on their faces.

"We heard from Maplestar that the two of you," Treetail

acknowledged the two she-cats with a nod. "That you got into some trouble with leaves. You've done a good job of cleaning the camp though, and Gingerpaw, it's very nice of you to help out."

"I'd suggest to Maplestar that we make you the camp cleaners and give you 'cleaner names' instead of your warrior names!" Battleheart added with a mrrow of laughter.

"No!!" Gingerpaw and Dogpaw yowled loudly. Greenpaw's eyes were wide with terror and yelped,

"What about being a medicine cat? I want to be a medicine cat not a cleaner!" Greenpaw gave a mock wail as she ducked her head trying not to laugh. Battleheart let out a roar of laughter and finally mewed out their next task between chuckles.

"The camp looks beautiful with the colourful dots of red, orange and yellow. Go get some fresh-kill and if you need, go down to the stream for some water. Dogpaw gratefully nodded at the deputy and raced towards the stream next to the camp. Gingerpaw followed her stride for stride and splashed into the water as they arrived. Dogpaw laughed.

"Have you turned into RainClan?"

"No! It's just really nice here. The water's so cool." Gingerpaw swatted Dogpaw with a wet paw and splattered her nose with fresh water. Yelping in mock surprise, Dogpaw dipped her paw in the water and flung a paw full of water onto Gingerpaw's back. Soon they found themselves bathed in water and drenched from nose to tail tip. Catching her breath from laughing so hard, Dogpaw finally managed to dip her muzzle into the refreshing water and take a long drink that soothed her dry throat. Gingerpaw was on his back, relaxing in the slow-flowing stream. Dogpaw raised her muzzle out of the water with tiny, clear drops of water clinging to her whiskers. She shook her muzzle as a drip of water trickled from the tip of her ear and onto the soft fluffy hairs underneath.

"Gingerpaw, I heard you're patrol found fox scent inside the borders. What was that about?"

Gingerpaw stood up in the stream, water streaming from his ginger and brown pelt.

"Cloudpaw and I scented fox, but we went to check it out and it was stale. Probably just because were so close to the other side of the territory." Shaking out her spiky, wet fur, Dogpaw bounded out off the pebbly shore and flopped down on the grass. Another brown pelt joined her and Dogpaw looked up to see Greenpaw sitting there. When Greenpaw saw the shock on the she-cat's face, she explained that Redheart had let her have some free time after all the work.

"What are you guys planning to do? And what happened to your pelts? They're all soaked!" Dogpaw giggled and Gingerpaw answered,

"We were having some fun in the stream." With a snort.

"Do you want to go hunt? I haven't hunted yet ever since I became the medicine cat apprentice!" Greenpaw exclaimed and pounced playfully on a spiky-looking fern.

"That's if you still know how to hunt!" Dogpaw teased and leaped away from Greenpaw's claws with a squeal. She shot of into the trees and finally stopped when she scented a mouse. Flicking her tail telling her friends to be quiet, Dogpaw slowly stalked towards a tree root. Pinpointing the exact position of the prey with her hearing and smell, Dogpaw leaped forward with unsheathed claws, but the mouse dashed away. Claws sinking into roots, Dogpaw hissed furiously and tore her claws out of the wood. Racing after the disappearing prey, she finally gave up when the rodent hid in a hole under a fern.

"Bad luck!" Gingerpaw called after her with a thrush in his mouth.

"Good catch!" Greenpaw exclaimed, "Why don't we split up!"

Nodding, Dogpaw walked towards the camp, disappointment from the previous failure weighing heavily in her stomach. Hoping to catch scent of prey, she finally managed to hear the scuffling paws of a squirrel. Dropping into a low crouch, remembering everything

Treetail taught her, Dogpaw stayed hidden until the last heartbeat. Claws sinking into grey fur, Dogpaw yowled happily as she killed the squirrel with a swift bite. Digging a shallow hole in the earth, Dogpaw buried the prey in dirt, making a note of where she'd left it. Flicking her ears as a swift flurry of wings rustled close by, Dogpaw trotted over and found Gingerpaw struggling with a huge crow. Screeching, Dogpaw launched herself onto the birds' great, black wings, weighing the crow down. Finally, Gingerpaw jumped onto the struggling bird and snapped his jaws down hard on it's neck. Triumph glowing in his eyes with the prey clamed in his teeth, he motioned towards the patch of dirt close by. Realizing that Gingerpaw was telling her to dig up his buried prey, Dogpaw uncovered the thrush with her paw and grasped it in her mouth. Then, she hurried over to the place where she'd hidden the squirrel and held it in her stuffed mouth with the thrush. Leading Gingerpaw, who was continuously tripping over the crow's wing, they met up with Greenpaw who successfully caught two mice and a vole by herself.

Jaws overflowed with fresh-kill, the three apprentices slowly made their way back to camp. Before they even got in, Battleheart burst through the brambles, anger burning in his eyes.

"Where'd you three-" He cut off his angry remark when his eyes caught the huge amount of fresh-kill in their mouths. "Oh! Okay, you three, come in. That's a lot of prey you caught!" Dogpaw nodded and shuffled behind the deputy with Greenpaw and Gingerpaw trailing behind. Everyone in the clan was seated in the clearing and when they looked at the apprentices, they gasped in astonishment.

"Where did you three find so much prey?"

"Wow! This is amazing!"

"The clan won't go hungry for seasons!"

Maplestar gave the apprentices a brief nod and motioned for them to drop their prey into the scrawny fresh-kill pile. Then, he yowled for the clan to be quiet.

"Dogpaw, Gingerpaw, Greenpaw, you three, come stand here." Maplestar pointed with his tail to the bottom of the Tall Tree. "You've done well today, catching all that prey and cleaning the camp into a much better place. I'd like to thank you all, and if I could, then I'd give you your warrior names. But, unfortunetly, Greenpaw, your name is to be given by your mentor, and Gingerpaw and Dogpaw, you still have a lot of training to do. Go take first pick from the pile and sit down." Maplestar's eyes glowed with pride for the apprentices in his clan as they trotted over to the fresh kill pile and took their pick. Choosing the huge crow for the three of them to share, Dogpaw settled down next to one of the large mounds of leaves. The bird was large and meaty. Dogpaw tore a bite out of the prey and enjoyed the flavorful mouthful of meat.

"This is amazing!" Greenpaw mewed through a mouthful of prey. "I never though a crow could taste so good! You guys did so well catching this!"

Dogpaw nodded and ate another piece of the crow. Sneezing on a feather that tickled her nose, Dogpaw gulped down her share of the prey. Before Maplestar had even finished his third sentence, the three starving apprentice's had finished the giant bird.

"Meeting over!" Maplestar mewed loudly. Dogpaw shook her head.

"What? Gingerpaw, what did Maplestar say? I never heard anything!" Dogpaw just realized she'd been dozing off when the leader was speaking.

"Something about attacking FieldClan for attacking us. He said that we'll sneak into their camp in two sunrises in the middle of the night." Gingerpaw started to groom himself. Fluffpaw sat down beside Gingerpaw and started to share tongues with him. Redpaw huddled next to Dogpaw while talking quietly.

"Good job! How did you catch that huge crow?"

"Gingerpaw had it at first. I just heard him and went over to help."

"Oh. No wonder! I'd think he couldn't even catch a mouse himself!"

"Hey! Don't say that! He caught a thrush by himself and he was the one who stalked and killed the crow." Redpaw grunted and stayed silent. Dogpaw finished cleaning herself and stalked off towards the apprentice's den, her sister's words still echoing in her head. He couldn't even catch a mouse himself! Growling Dogpaw settled into her nest and stared at the other end of the den, trying to fall asleep. She heard Fluffpaw, Palepaw and Cloudpaw clamber into their nests and she soon heard Palepaw snoring. Only Palepaw snored so loud. Finally, Redpaw curled up in the moss beside her and she dozed off asleep.

Chapter 13

Gingerpaw

Gingerpaw lay curled up comfortably in his mossy nest as a happy dream of catching tons of mice swirled in his brain. A prod to the flank awoke him.

"Gingerpaw! Time for the dawn patrol!" Battleheart was looming over him, eyes dark against the shadow of his wide shoulders. Grunting, Gingerpaw scrambled to his paws and gave himself a shake. He emerged from the den to see that the sun wasn't even up yet.

"Why do we have to go on a patrol so early? Even the sun's not up yet!" Gingerpaw complained, but followed his mentor to the exit. Fluffpaw was yawning and his mentor, Spottedlegs, was looking drowsy.

"Come on, cheer up!" Battleheart told the tired patrol as they slowly crawled out of the camp. "We're going towards the SunClan border first, just to make sure those fox-hearts don't come back." As they strolled along the border, marking bushes and shrubs, Gingerpaw started to wake up and enjoy the early morning weather and the cool dew under his paws as he padded along.

Suddenly, murmurs and mews erupted from the other side of the forest. Gingerpaw jerked his head up and scented SunClan.

"SunClan!" Fluffpaw yowled at the same time as Gingerpaw.

"Shhh." Spottedlegs shushed her apprentice and mewed, "We have to be careful and make sure we're not surrounded or out numbered before attacking."

Battleheart nodded in agreement with the she-cat and slowly lead

their way towards the voices of cats. Gingerpaw glimpsed the patterened cats as they clambered around on LightningClan territory, clearly not wanting to go anywhere.

"LightningClan, attack!" the loud battle call rang through the air and the patrol of four cats erupted onto the SunClan cats.

"Those mangy-dirt balls won't stand a chance against us!" Fluffpaw yowled fiercely and fell into battle alongside Gingerpaw. A red-brown she-cat with pale green eyes faced Gingerpaw, her blazing eyes round with fury. Lashing his tail, Gingerpaw leaped at the other apprentice with unsheathed claws on full extend and slashed his claws across the she-cat's reddish muzzle. She yowled in pain and raked her claws wildly across Gingerpaw's direction. Inexperienced paws reached for Gingerpaw and he easily dodged the claws and quickly nipped the she-cat on the heels. Spinning around fiercely, fear now sparking in her eyes, sharp, white teeth snapped towards his ear tip and he whirled around to face the she-cat once more.

"Poppypaw! Don't let them get past you!" A fierce golden she-cat yowled at the apprentice crouched in front of him.

"Yes Goldenleaf!" Popppypaw mewed softly. She unsheathed her silvery claws and suddenly leaped at Gingerpaw with such a strong force it caused him to topple over. Sliding and squirming with the other apprentice, Gingerpaw grasped her belly in his hind claws and thrust Poppypaw off of him. She visibly winced as her flank landed on the hard ground with a heavy thud. Crouching and leaping, Gingerpaw pinned the she-cat down with two forepaws and kept the struggling apprentice down easily.

"If you can't fight, then don't stay on our territory!" He snarled down at Poppypaw's narrowed green eyes.

"I'm a medicine apprentice training to be a medicine cat, not a warrior like you are!" Poppypaw spat back at Gingerpaw with a half-failed growl. "Now get off of me!" Poppypaw wrenched herself out of his claws and Gingerpaw watched the medicine apprentice recoil back into SunClan territory with her clan mates swarming ahead of her.

"If I know SunClan, then they're definitely coming back." Spottedlegs mewed and licked her shoulder which was bleeding. Battleheart nodded and decided they should go back to

Marking the borders until SunClan came again.

“I wonder what they’re up to. I saw Lemonfur there too! They’re bringing elders and kits onto our territory!” Fluffpaw mewed and unsheathed his bloody claws.

“I was attacked by Poppypaw, the medicine apprentice.” Gingerpaw added and licked his sore tail. Poppypaw may be the medicine apprentice, but she still has the fierce fighting moves of a warrior. The patrol continued in silence when Battleheart suddenly yowled out a warning.

“SunClan alert!” The branches on the border parted, revealing the snowy white leader of the rival clan. The she-cats glittering fangs were revealed in a snarl and her unsheathed claws dug ten neat holes in the earth.

“SunClan, attack!” The warriors behind Cloudstar burst out and the LightningClan cats were engulfed in a tornado of claws.

“Gingerpaw, help!” Gingerpaw heard the shriek of Fluffpaw and the strong mew of his mentor telling him what to do.

“Gingerpaw, don’t panic. Try getting through their barrier and go back to camp for reinforcements.” Battleheart was nowhere in sight, but Gingerpaw scented his mentor close by. “Go!”

Gingerpaw spotted a gap in the whirling group of cats and hurled himself towards it at full speed. Extending his claws for a better grip on the slippery floor of the leaf covered forest, Gingerpaw pelted towards the camp only to meet Maplestar heads on with a strong band of LightningClan warriors racing behind him. The second patrol whisked by him, leaving Snowtail and Gingerpaw behind.

“Gingerpaw! My handsome little kit. Come here, you’re not hurt, are you?” Snowtail licked at Gingerpaw’s scratches and tried to

grasp him by the scruff.

“Hey! I’m not a kit anymore! Battleheart, Fluffpaw and Spottedlegs need help!” Gingerpaw squirmed out of Snowtails reach and galloped after Maplestars patrol.

The forest was filled with fighting cats and Gingerpaw felt the SunClan cats back off.

“Leave us alone, you fox-breaths!” Goldenpaw yowled.

“Yeah! This is LightningClan territory and we’ll fight for it!!” Cloudpaw added.

“Run home like little kittypets!” Palepaw screeched. Soon, all the apprentices of the clan were yowling at the retreating SunClan cats.

“LightningClan’s apprentices!” A loud hiss from Maplestar sounded furious behind them. “We don’t celebrate our victory by insulting the enemy, instead, we let them run back in silence. True warriors don’t brag over their triumph.” Gingerpaw felt the apprentices around him crouch down in guilt and he joined them, for he had also called out to the SunClan cats.

“Alright, let’s go back before you cause more trouble.” Maplestar glared at the apprentices and padded away. The rest of the warriors followed their leader in silence. Gingerpaw sped up to catch up with Battleheart and fell into place beside his mentor.

Back in camp, Maplestar announced the fact that Skymountain was expecting his kits with a proud glance at his mate, but not too many cats were paying attention and there were a few half-hearted cheers in the crowd.

“Gingerpaw, let’s go hunt.” A low mew startled him and Gingerpaw turned to see Battleheart looming over him, eyes betraying none of his feelings.

“Are you going to get mad at me like Maplestar did?” Gingerpaw tentively asked his mentor. Battleheart shook his head wearily as if thinking about something in his memories.

“You did well in battle today, although you do have to improve on a lot of things if you were almost beaten by the medicine apprentice.” They continued to walk in silence. “Yowling at a retreating rival clan is not appropriate and I want you to remember that if you want to become a good warrior.”

Gingerpaw nodded hard and replied,

“Of course I want to become a good warrior! I want to be the future leader of LightningClan, Gingerstar!”

Battleheart closed his eyes and shook his head.

“You still have a long way to go.” Gingerpaw sighed and clambered after his mentor who had started to pad away, tail flicking. Shuffling his paws noisily without think, Gingerpaw startled a squirrel near by. Suddenly alerted by the prey, Gingerpaw shot after the squirrel at high speed. Battleheart was watching intently, eyes glowing softly as if assessing his apprentice’s hunting skills.

Gingerpaw followed the squirrel as it skimmed over a twig and it ducked under a fallen log as if trying to throw its’ persuader off. Instead of falling for the squirrels little trick, Gingerpaw leaped nimbly over the log and landed square on the squirrels’ head. The rodent was killed instantly. Gingerpaw grabbed the crushed squirrel in his jaws, holding it high, preventing the prey from dragging in the mud. Tail held high in the air, Gingerpaw strolled back to his mentor, eyes glazing into the glaring sun. Battleheart regarded his ginger apprentice trying to force the astonishment out of his eyes. Gingerpaw jerked his head towards Battleheart, let go of the squirrel, and sent the prey flying right at his mentor’s feet. Battleheart gazed at his apprentice with acknodging eyes.

“Good catch!” Gingerpaw fluffed up his chest, glowing in the praise. Swinging his tail lazily behind him, Gingerpaw walked over to next to a bramble bush and scraped at the dirt. A shallow hole was dug and the brownish gray squirrel was dropped inside and buried. A small mouse skittered in front of Gingerpaw, but it was too fast for him and the rodent escaped from the sharp claws on his ginger paws. Sighing again, as he lifted his head to see Battleheart waiting for him, they padded on.

“Let’s split up and meet here again.” Battleheart suggested. Gingerpaw nodded and padded towards the opposite direction as his mentor.

Gingerpaw didn’t catch anything after they split up, but Battleheart returned with two shrews. They picked up Gingerpaw’s squirrel, and returned to the camp. Battleheart had told Gingerpaw to take a break and go relax with the other apprentices. Fluffpaw, Cloudpaw, Palepaw, Goldenpaw, Redpaw, Dogpaw and Leafpaw were crowded around the apprentice’s den, huddled together discussing something.

“What’s going on here?” Gingerpaw meowed and tried to squish in to the group. No one paided attention to him.

“What’s going on here?!?” Gingerpaw yowled. Everyone quieted and turned around.

“Gingerpaw, there you are!” Fluffpaw was the first one to talk.

“Maplestar said the apprentice’s could all take a break and go do something together!” Redpaw exclaimed.

“We were discussing where to go. Cloudpaw, Palepaw, and Greenpaw want to go to the pine forest. The rest of us want to go to the stream.” Dogpaw announced the tallies so far.

“I want to go to the stream.” Gingerpaw told the eager apprentices. Cloudpaw and Palepaw looked a little upset, but cheered up again when the apprentices moved towards the exit of the camp.

“That’s a large group going out!” Velvetnose exclaimed from her sunning patch next to the exit. “Where are you youngsters going this time? I hope you have Maplestar’s permission!”

Not one apprentice stopped to reply.

Gingerpaw followed the hustling group of apprentices and landed next to Palepaw.

“This is so exciting!” He panted. Gingerpaw nodded in reply for it was hard to hear with the thundering loud paw steps of the group.

“Even though I wanted to go to the pine forest, this is awesome!” Nodding again, Gingerpaw burst into the clearing at the head of the group and splashed into the stream. Cloudpaw brought up the rear with Dogpaw and they all ran into the stream.

“Hey!” A loud yowl erupted from Greenpaw. Redpaw had splashed her with the cold water. The medicine apprentice flung a paw full of water onto Redpaw, but the nimble she-cat ducked and Greenpaw splattered Fluffpaw instead.

Soon, a roar of laughter rumbled in the air as the playful apprentice’s threw water all over each other.

“Ha! Got you this time!” Freezing water sloshed onto Gingerpaw’s back and he twisted around to attack his attacker. It was the spiky fur of Dogpaw. Gingerpaw yowled in delight and leaped on top of the she-cat with his soaked pelt. Snarling in mock agony, Dogpaw battered Gingerpaw back with her heavy, wet paws.

Gingerpaw flopped down on the pebbly shore of the stream and panted heavily while straining to catch his breath. The other apprentices were all splayed out on the grass and shore, tired after playing like kits again in the water.

“Is this how LightningClan trains their apprentices?” A low growl grumbled towards them. Gingerpaw leaped up and shook the water dripplets out of his pelt. Palepaw growled back menacing and took a step forward to the mysterious sound.

“Cloudpaw, be careful!” Dogpaw mewed and bounded up beside the white tom. Fluffpaw flanked Cloudpaw with Palepaw behind him and Redpaw scurried up beside Dogpaw. Gingerpaw hurried over behind the two she-cats and braced himself as Goldenpaw, Greenpaw and Leafpaw leaped up behind him. Hackles raised and fur bristling, Gingerpaw snarled as the bushes rustled.

“Who is it?” Palepaw hissed. “Step out if you’re brave enough to face all of LightningClan’s apprentices!”

“Ha! I doubt you apprentice’s are any use for your clan if all you do is splash around in streams.” A raspy voice added on to the first cat.

A huge, bulky tom strolled forward with his one green eye glistening. The other eye was torn out. A scraggy tabby she-cat followed on his right side and a pure black tom on the left, both snarling at the apprentices.

Dogpaw took a step forward, flanked by Redpaw who was slightly behind her.

“If you’re strong enough and brave enough, try taking on all of us and I bet you’ll get your share of scratches and bites!” Gingerpaw lashed his tail furiously as the huge tom stepped towards them, interest lighting in his eyes.

“If that’s all you want, then we’ll fight! Bloodclan, attack!” The scraggy she-cat and black tom surged forward with one more tom behind them. The huge tom with one eye watched them though his green eye.

“What?!?! Bloodclan??!!” Fluffpaw looked outraged at the name of such a horrid clan as he screeched and clawed forward.

The Bloodclan cats weren’t any problem and the strong band of apprentices beat them easily. Even Greenpaw managed to shred the ears of the one-eyed tom. The intruders slowly backed off.

“Looks like we underestimated you little kit-like things. Splashing around in the stream and acting like nothing could ever go wrong. I don’t think we want anything to do with these mangy fur-balls. Scorch, Snake, Soot, lets go. We shall not bother these cats. We are not their opponent. **YOU** are too weak.” The huge, bulky tom spat after batting at the pure black tom named Soot with his huge claws and padded away into the dense undergrowth.

“Yes Furious.” The three cats mewed in unison and limped after the tom named Furious.

“Well, that was easier than it looked!” Greenpaw exclaimed after the Bloodclan cats left. “I never thought I could fight one of those things, but I batted the guy named Furious away with a single paw!”

Leafpaw nodded in agreement and jumped back into the stream.

“Is anyone hurt?” Cloudpaw asked at the exact same time as Gingerpaw. Everyone shook their heads.

“Those cats were far too easy to fight. How could we get hurt?”

Murmurs and giggles flowed through the apprentices as the leaped over the stream in a powerful bound and headed back to camp.

The setting sun lay bright coloured streaks across the sky and the sun itself was glowing with a dark, bloody red. Gingerpaw shivered as a wisp of wind sifted through his wet fur. Spiky pelts brushed his as Gingerpaw raced along side the other apprentices.

When they entered the camp, it was quiet with a few cats lingering around and sharing tongues. Brownclaw was sharing tongues with his littermate and Maplestar was finishing off a mouse next to Skymountain. The queen’s belly was already round with kits as she lay lazily on the ground next to her mate. Maplestar rose to his feet as the apprentices scrambled into the clearing and mewed,

“Did you have fun?” Gingerpaw nodded eagerly and a few cats mumured ‘yes’. Maplestar narrowed his eyes supiciously. Slowly circling the apprentices, he suddenly asked,

“Why do I smell blood?”

Chapter 14

Dogpaw

Dogpaw froze at the leader's question. Should they tell Maplestar about their encounter with the weird BloodClan cats? Dogpaw decided that it was probably a good idea to and clearly Cloudpaw thought so too.

"We were cooling off in the stream close to the SunClan border when we encountered a few ragged-pelted cats. They claimed themselves to be BloodClan, but they smelt more of LightningClan." The white-furred tom mewed calmly and their leader nodded slowly, eyes dodging from one apprentice to the other.

"Those stupid furballs claimed they could beat all of us off, but guess what?" Fluffpaw added in anticipation when Maplestar's eyes fell on him. Without leaving any time for their leader to reply, he continued on. "We could have beat them single pawed! They totally were no match for all of LightningClan's apprentices!"

"Good. I don't think they will be any concern for the clan. The other clans have reported to have seen them too, but they were easily kicked off. I once heard from Fernstar that BloodClan was once a ferocious clan that attacked the other clans before, but they were scattered. I'll make sure Battleheart tells the patrols to keep an eye out for them. You can all go get something to eat before you rest." Maplestar watched the apprentices leave one by one with glittering yellow eyes as he dismissed them with a sweep of his tail. Dogpaw felt Redpaw tense for a moment next to her, but the she-cat shivered a little and relaxed again. Dogpaw was about to ask her sister what was going on, but Redpaw just padded back towards the apprentice's den on heavy paws. Twitching her nose, Dogpaw thought she smelled blood. Cocking her head, she suddenly caught sight of a bright red gash on one of Redpaw's hindquarters. She gasped out loud.

"Redpaw! What happened?" Skittering towards her sister on

suddenly weak and wobbly legs, Dogpaw rushed over and forced herself between Redpaw and the entrance to the apprentice's den. Redpaw looked startled with her orangish-red ears twitching in annoyance, but didn't say much.

"Why didn't you tell anyone about that deep scratch on your leg?" Dogpaw was now furiously worried about her sister. Moving quickly behind the she-cat, Dogpaw licked gingerly at the wound. Redpaw winced in pain and whirled around hissing with her ears flattened. Eyes round and blazing, Dogpaw stepped forward so she was nose-to-nose with her sister.

"Why didn't you tell anyone?" She demanded for the second time.

"I don't need you worrying about me! I can take care of myself!" Redpaw retorted madly.

"That scrape looks deep!"

"So what? I'm not going to bleed to death!"

"It could get infected!"

"Well, if you leave me alone so I can lick it clean, then it won't get infected!"

"You have to go to Redheart."

"No I don't!"

"Yes you do!" Dogpaw was about to drag her sister over to the medicine cat's den when a voice inturruped them.

"Can you guys get out of the way?" Shelltail growled menacing at the two littermates. "Or are you going to stay here until sunrise?" The tom was surprisingly tall now that he was up close, but Dogpaw shifted upwards so she was nearly up to the warriors' neck.

"What are **you** planning to do in the apprentice's den? Sleep in it?" Redpaw hissed back at the glowering brown tom.

"Did Maplestar make you an apprentice again? Should I call you

Shellpaw now?" Dogpaw teased, undaunted by the warrior's bristling fur and strong, solid muscles. Shelltail furiously smashed into Dogpaw with his front claw's extended, but Dogpaw nimbly stepped to the side and avoided the attack.

"I'm going in to see if Goldenpaw got hurt, so get out of the way!" The tom spat into Dogpaw's face and moved towards the den.

"Are you looking for me?" A sweet, soft voice murmured behind them. Golden coloured fur swished behind them and the yellow she-cat emerged from the tall grasses behind them.

"Goldenpaw! I was looking for you!" Shelltail mewed in a much gentler tone than before. Goldenpaw bounded to his side in two leaps and brushed affectionatly at his muzzle. Dogpaw groaned outloud. Not the two of them again. The pair ignored her and continued on romatically.

"Let's leave these dirty cats here to pick at their fleas. I want to go out of the camp for a while." Goldenpaw glared back at Dogpaw and Redpaw as Shelltail lead her away.

"Of course. They're nothing but stupid furballs." Shelltail murmured back.

Once they were out of hearing's range, Redpaw growled an echo of Dogpaw's thoughts.

"How in the name of StarClan can Goldenpaw stand that dirt-pelt and how can he be so romantic around her? He's always the most annoying and the meanest. Even to Maplestar he's all rude and inappropriate, but with Goldenpaw, he's a different cat!"

Dogpaw nodded in full agreement and yawned.

"Let's go to sleep, but first, you get that scratch fixed." Dogpaw nudged Redpaw towards Greenpaw who was padding towards the fresh-kill pile.

"Why Greenpaw?" Redpaw whined like a kit.

"Come on, she's just as good as Redheart!"

"Fine, but I'm going to sleep after this. I'm so tired my paws could drop off!"

Dogpaw let Redpaw go to Greenpaw herself and padded into the apprentice's den.

Dogpaw blinked a few times. Where was everyone? The apprentice's den was deserted. All the nests were cold and not a single cat was inside but her. Groaning as she realized it was sunhigh already, Dogpaw padded wearily out of the den. Testing out her claws by unsheathing them, Dogpaw realized they were blunt. She reached out onto one of the tall, rough pine trees and scraped them sharp again. Then, she hurried over to Treetail while trying to give herself a good clean. Triping over her own paws trying to stop when her mentor confronted her out of nowhere, she realized he'd already come back from a morning patrol.

"What are we going to do to-" Dogpaw couldn't help yawn through the middle of her sentence. "Today?" Treetail chuckled softly and thrust his head towards a few apprentices and their mentors near the shadow of the Tall Tree.

"Hunting. I want to see you do well today." Treetail motioned for Dogpaw to join them and followed close behind. Dogpaw trotted up to the group and discovered they were all older apprentice's that were better than her. Pushing away the fear that thumped inside, she stepped closer towards the group.

Cloudpaw, Palepaw, Leafpaw and Goldenpaw were off to one side while their mentors Hawkwing, Jaypelt, Eagleclaw and Blazeheart were talking quietly with their heads pressed close together.

Cloudpaw lifted his head and caught a glance at Dogpaw. His eyes sparked mischeviously and he waved Dogpaw over with his fluffy tail. Cocking her head, Dogpaw joined the apprentices and started to listen to their conversation.

"Blazeheart was teaching me how to do the flip-claw!" Palepaw mewed and offered to show everyone how it was done. Goldenpaw shook her head harshly.

"Everyone knows how to do the flip-claw! That's what we were taught to do ask kits!"

"I don't know how to the flip-claw." Dogpaw mewed quietly. Goldenpaw gasped and stared at Dogpaw with her multi-coloured eyes.

"You don't?!?"

Before Goldenpaw could say another word, Palepaw twirled around happily.

"Does that mean I can show you? Yay!" Palepaw stepped out of the group and flipped high up into the air and whipped an unsheathed claw in mid-air. Goldenpaw was still staring at her as if she had suddenly turned into a two-leg.

"Oh that move!" Dogpaw recognized the easy battle move Palepaw had just demostrated. "Is that was a flip-claw is? Oh. I didn't know."

"Well obviously it's called a flip-claw. All you do is flip in mid air and claw at your attacker!" Goldenpaw retorted and acted as if Dogpaw was a small little kit.

Just then, Treetail, Hawkwing, Jaypelt, Eagleclaw and Blazeheart padded over.

"Good job Palepaw. It's nice of you to show everyone your battle moves, but we'll be going on a hunting lesson today." Blazeheart told the apprentice.

Palepaw pouted and sat down again.

"It's okay Palepaw, we'll do battle moves tonight okay?" Cloudpaw shuffled over to his brother and mewed softly into his ear. Palepaw gave a quick nod and returned his attention to his mentor. Dogpaw wondered where the brothers would be going tonight, but shook her head to remove the thought.

"First we will talk about hunting as a large group, then, your mentors will take you on a small hunt and see what you can bring back." Blazeheart flicked her tail and strolled out of camp. The

other mentors padded after her with their apprentices huddled behind. Hunting was Dogpaw's favourite thing, even if it was Palepaw's worst. The world would seem so still and quiet when she was stalking as if everything in the territory was holding their breath so she could catch the prey. She loved the satisfication of warm flesh under her claws and the thought that her prey would feed her clan.

Leaping to the front of the group, Dogpaw enjoyed the late morning sunshine as she followed along with gentle paw steps. One of the warriors started talking about hunting, but Dogpaw only heard half of it. The other half of her mind was looking at the tall birch trees surrounding them and the beautiful little birds fluttering around in the air. She suddenly felt sorry for the little birds that they hunted down, but quickly pushed away the thought. The clan needed the food to survive.

The leaf-fall leaves glowed in the sun, their colours creating a lovely scene of red, orange, yellow, green, and brown dots. All the leaves looked pretty similar from a distance, but when she studied harder, Dogpaw noticed that one leaf had a bright red center, an orange middle and a yellow rim. Another leaf was green with large spots of brown on it.

Twisting her head and narrowing her eyes, Dogpaw enviously watched the colourful birds flutter in front of the blinding sun. Wishing that she could have wings and fly so freely like the birds, a sudden voice startled her.

"Dogpaw! Have you gotten cloudfluff in your head? I'm asking you a question!" Eagleclaw was hissing furiously at her. Freezing in mid step with one fore paw outstretched and a hind leg wavering above the ground, Dogpaw balanced precariously as she cringed under the growl.

"Have you thought of an answer yet?"

Finally placing her two paws back on the ground, she turned and looked at the other apprentices. Goldenpaw and Redpaw were nose-to-nose, giggling softly, while Cloudpaw and Palepaw looked as if they were about to burst into a roar of laughter.

"What did you ask?" Dogpaw finally managed to sputter out. At last, the two toms couldn't hold their cackle and burst into a snickering and snorting laugh.

Eagleclaw shook his head with a sigh and repeated his question for what had probably been the twelveth time.

"I asked whether or not squirrels are easy to chase, but it seems as if you've got your head stuck in a rabbit hole." Stunned at the stupid and easy question, Dogpaw replied quickly.

"Of course not. Squirrels climb trees very quickly and are hard to catch by chasing."

"That's all you have to say. I don't get what took you so long to think about." Eagleclaw shook his head disapprovingly and turned to Treetail.

"Does she always have listening problems? If she does, maybe you should ask Maplestar to make her stay in the nursery until she is mature enough."

"I don't need to go-" Dogpaw cut in desprately. Treetail raised a tail signaling for her to be quiet.

"She usually listens fairly well. I will have a word with her once the lesson is done." Treetail glared at Dogpaw with a fierce eye and a shiver crawled down her spine.

Eagleclaw nodded slowly and turned to the rest of the apprentices.

“Calm yourselves! You’re bound to scare all the prey all the way to Low Valley!” Leafpaw and Goldenpaw clamped their mouths shut and sat down. Cloudpaw and Palepaw struggled to keep quiet and put on an innocent look.

Dogpaw had heard of the Low Valley before when Fluffpaw was telling them about the gatherings. Just before they had been apprentices, there had been a full moon and since Fluffpaw had been apprenticed already, he got to go. Gingerpaw had been really upset that he would have to wait an entire moon until he got to go to a gathering, but Dogpaw noted that herself and Redpaw would

also have to wait.

“The Low Valley is where the clans meet for gatherings, right?” Dogpaw asked just to make sure, Treetail nodded.

“Let’s go now, we’ve been squaking like pigeons ever since we left the camp.” Jaypelt growled and stalked off into the trees. Goldenpaw hurried over and disappeared after her mentor.

Hawkwing padded after Leafpaw in the other direction while muttering something to his apprentice.

“Let’s go.” Treetail murmured in Dogpaw’s ear and walked towards the FieldClan border. Dogpaw scurried after him, not wanting to be left behind with the fierce Eagleclaw.

Once they where out of hearing distance of the other pairs, Treetail stopped and turned to Dogpaw.

“Dogpaw, I’d like you to listen more closely when you’re given lessons. The surrounding trees may be beautiful, but you’re here to learn, not to stare at trees. If I find you with your head in the clouds again, you’ll find yourself face-to-face with fur and ticks for a quarter moon.” Dogpaw gulped at the punishment. Getting stuck with elders and ticks for an entire quarter moon is **not** a good thing.

“Understood?” Dogpaw nodded meekly and curled her tail. Temporarily satisfied by her answer, Treetail returned his attention to hunting. “See if you can scent any prey. Leaf-fall is at it’s peak and there should be a fair amount of squirrels.”

Dogpaw carefully scented the air. Not much could be smelt, just a faint squirrel, a few acorns and a stupid bug crawling into her ear. Shaking her head vigorisly, Dogpaw shook the insect out and reported her findings to Treetail.

“A faint scent of squirrel, a few acorns and a strong scent of FieldClan, probably just the borders.” Testing the air himself, Treetail nodded and padded on.

“If you can’t find anything here, try somewhere else.”

Dogpaw trotted along the leafy path, but there wasn’t much prey. Everything seemed to be hiding from some deep evil haunting the territory.

A sudden rustling alerted her.

“Who is it?” Treetail growled menacing. The rustling stopped. “I know you’re there, come out right now before I shred your ears. You are currently treespassing LightningClan territory.”

A small orange pelt stepped out from the tall grass. Bright, yellow eyes glimmering, it sat down in front of the Clan cats with it's flaming pelt flashing blazing orange in the sunshine.

“It’s you!” Dogpaw gasped as recognition of the cat.